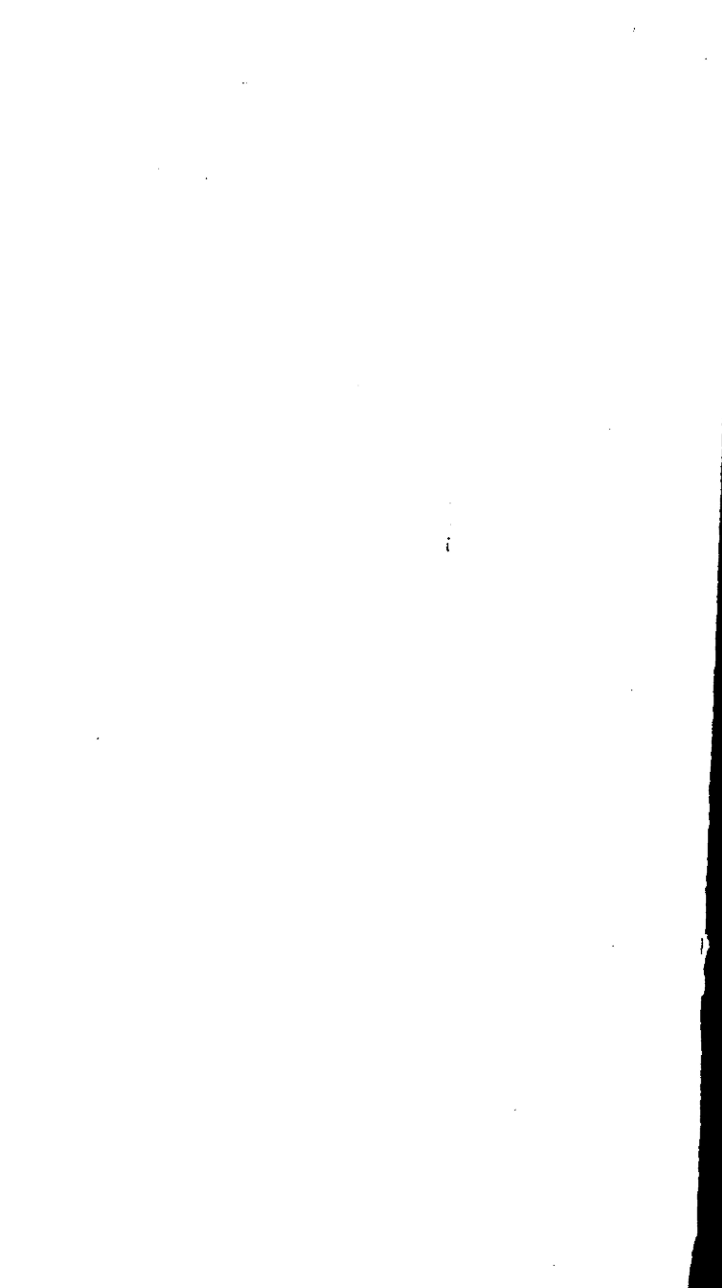


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VINDICATION
OF
"THE RELIGION OF THE LAND"
FROM MISREPRESENTATION;
AND
AN EXPOSURE
OF THE ABSURD PRETENSIONS
OF THE
GARELOCH ENTHUSIASTS.
IN A LETTER TO
THOMAS ERSKINE, ESQ., ADVOCATE.

BY THE
REV. A. ROBERTSON, A. M.

"Contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—JUDE 3.

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ERRATA.

Page 58 line 17, <i>for</i> redemption, <i>read</i> restoration.	
— 91 — 4, — ingenuous, — ingenious.	
— 105 — 26, — were to pass, — were told to pass.	
— 106 — 5, — ellipsis, — ellipses.	
— 109 — 14, — state, — stage.	
— 134 — 4, — from, — form.	

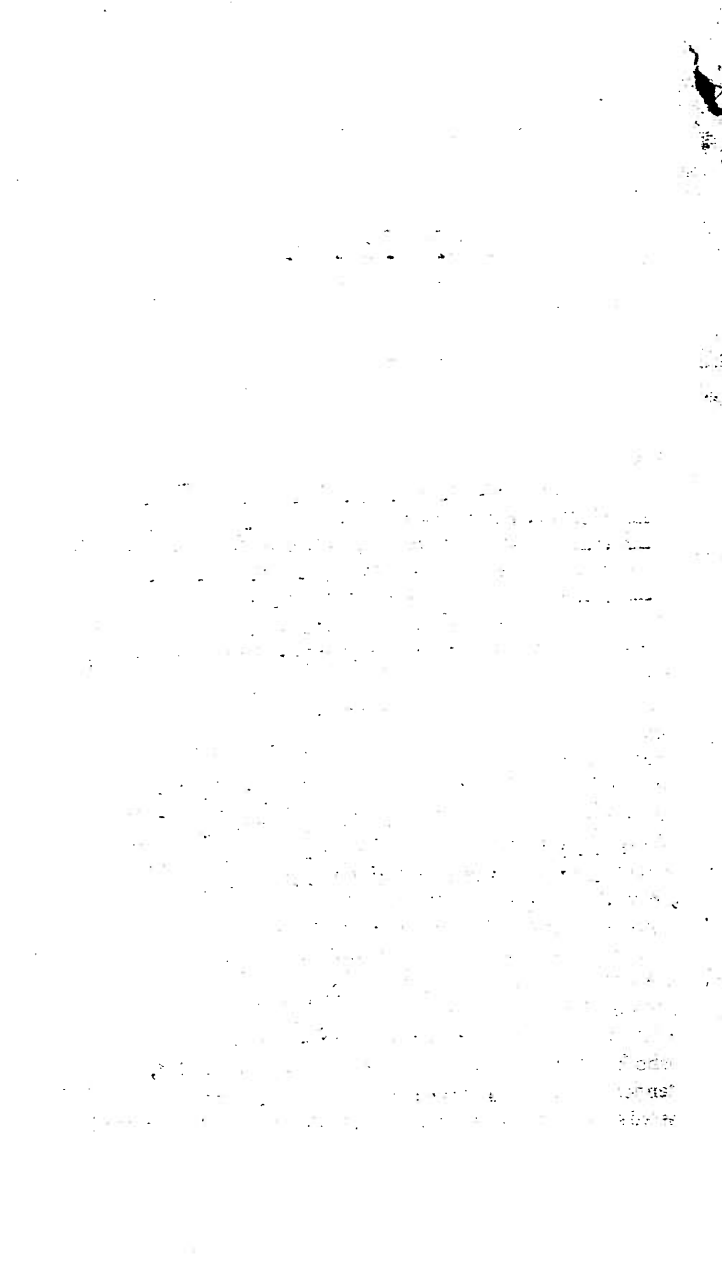
PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION,

BY THE SAME AUTHOR,

A Comprehensive Sketch

OF ALL RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS,

ANCIENT AND MODERN.



LETTER, &c.

SIR,

Your wish in the conclusion of your Treatise on "the Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel" is most remarkable. "At all events," you say, "I trust it may not do you the injury of exciting the spirit of controversy." The subject of your attack in your late publications is "the Religion of the Land." Our Ministers, according to your report, are not preaching the Gospel—selfishness is the actuating principle of our religious people, and, without a righteousness which is according to the Bible, they are satisfied with a self-righteousness. Are we to receive these "*hard sayings*," without their exciting in us the spirit of controversy? Your works are written with the specific intention of condemning the religion and religious professors of the present day, and of making converts to your own system; and are those who differ from you in opinion not justifiable in giving a reason of the hope that is in them, and endeavouring to arrest in their progress the errors which you and your adherents are so active in disseminating? On the one hand you are extremely anxious to gain proselytes, for you "*would reckon it an unspeakable joy to be so honoured*;" and on the other you are no less anxious that those who know the amount of your errors and their dangerous tendency, should not engage in this controversy;—in other words, you wish to be allowed, unmolested, to make inroads

on "the Religion of the Land," or rather I should say, on the Religion of the Bible. It is candid thus to express a wish, the origin of which is "*pure selfishness*," for many profess that in the promulgation of their opinions they are influenced by disinterested motives, when in reality the exciting cause is "*selfishness—pure selfishness*." Were it in our power to oppose your errors by force, we would say with Gamaliel, "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought;" it is lawful, however, to oppose erroneous doctrines by argument, and it is the duty of every Christian to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and to "be zealously affected in a good cause." The writer of this Letter intended to comply with your wish, and would have done so, had not the occurrence of a circumstance, which he need not mention, directed his thoughts to your Introductory Essay to "Extracts of Letters by a Lady." He takes the liberty therefore of assuring you, that that publication *has* excited in him "*the spirit of controversy*," and what you have had the merit of being the cause of producing, you will perhaps take the trouble to examine, and, to leave you with your own advice—"If you don't agree with it, lay it down and go to the Bible; and if you do agree with it, in like manner lay it down and go to the Bible, and go in the spirit of prayer to him whose word the Bible is, and ask of him, and he will lead you into all truth—he will give you living water."* I have endeavoured in some degree to copy your manner of writing, and hence you will find me more practical than profound. My plan, I hope, is simple and systematic—my arguments direct—and my conclusions legitimate. I have allowed you the full advantage of what some would call *canting* in argument, and have endeavoured rather to convince the judgment than to allure by insinuating appeals to the heart.

* Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, page 240.

My charity for your system may not be great, but I have not in any sweeping assertion, treated it as you have done what you call "the religion of the land."

Your own system, you now seem, in some degree, to comprehend, as there is at least an apparent consistency in the plan; but the system you oppose you either do not understand, or you wilfully misrepresent. The elements of your system first appeared in your "Essay on Faith," and at that time escaped exposure, on account of the disguised nature of your statements, and the opinion entertained of you as a Theologian, from your "Remarks on the Internal Evidences of Christianity." Your errors were then only in progress, and the truth still lingering in your breast, gave a greater degree of plausibility to your opinions than was consistent with their true nature. In your "Essay on the Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel," a great part of your system was prominently brought into view, but so much imbued with the hallowed pathos of practical piety, that for your doctrinal errors you were the object rather of pity than of the censure which you justly merited.

In the Introductory Essay to "Extracts of Letters," your system, with its principal peculiarities, is fully developed, and the feelings you entertain towards those who differ from you in opinion, are stated without reserve. The production is valuable, because it brings before the mind your opinions compressed in small compass, and enables the enquirer, without much effort, to separate the chaff from the wheat, and come to a satisfactory conclusion on the points in debate. This is of importance; for it is a most unpleasant thing to be charged with error, and not be able exactly to understand the nature of that error. This was the case of your opponents till of late. Doctrines impress different minds in a different manner, and as the statement given of your opinions was ever varying, they consequently could not be fully refuted by those who could give a reason of the hope that is in them. You have already found, and you will yet find, that your opponents are active, and in some

cases, men of mighty mental energy;* and if you will not cease to disturb the peace of Israel, you must bear the results of a religious controversy, which, if you have not the demerit of commencing, you have at least the demerit of continuing, and rendering notorious by obstinacy in the progressive stages of error in doctrine and practice.

We should tread lightly on the ashes of the dead, and you no doubt suppose that you have done a service to mankind by snatching from oblivion these Extracts of Letters. The peculiar doctrines avowed by the writer of these letters are few, and you ought to have stated candidly the amount of your difference and agreement, and not have endeavoured, by an introduction, to make your readers believe, that in the letters they would recognise one of kindred sentiments with the writer of the Introduction. The doctrine on which the Lady, who wrote the letters, chiefly insists, is, that Christ died not for the elect only, but for all, and her few remaining peculiarities are either stated indirectly, or expressed as doubts. In your own words, "she believed that this world which God loved and for which Christ died, was in very deed the whole world, which necessarily included herself, and not an uncertain and undefinable part, which might include her or not." The opinions which she had embraced have a connection with some parts of your belief, but since her mind was not sufficiently expansive to connect the principles of your system with their ramifications, it may be questioned whether it was proper to introduce her letters, so limited in reference to doctrines, with an Essay containing much of which perhaps she might have had doubts, and

* Mentioning some time ago to one of your adherents that as Dr. Thomson had turned his attention to the subject, he would probably produce a complete refutation of your system, the reply was made, that the Doctor had not *the spirit of the gospel*, and therefore was not qualified for the discussion. An easy method this to get rid of a powerful opponent, and unanswerable arguments.

a great part of which, so far as its application extends, she might have denied.

As you are not a systematic writer, your opinions are not to be found in regular order in your publications, but must be collected in a detached form, and from the general bearing of your arguments and illustrations. A particular analysis of your opinions, presenting at a glance the points of discussion, with the manner in which they are illustrated, cannot be given. They can only be subjected to a general analysis, as they are the result of a general plan before your own mind, and connected frequently with remarks, illustrations, and arguments of indirect reference. This method of writing has its advantages. A doctrine stated strongly in one page, is frequently, on turning the leaf, so modified or connected with other opinions, that from this cause your works please your adherents, in establishing them in their errors, and at the same time in furnishing them with plausible modifications with which to oppose those who trace your opinions to their legitimate results. You dread a pitched battle. Like a scouting party you are ever in motion, and brandish the weapons of defiance at a distance, and if by accident you are brought into close combat, feeling the strength of the enemy, you retreat to your camp, and fight from your entrenchments. Warring with a foe who has a fixed plan, when driven from one defence, another is secured, and thus, while on one side is heard the shout of victory, on the other you continue to maintain the attitude of defiance. To drop the figure—If you will not give a systematic view of your opinions, we must unite, into a regular plan, your scattered remarks on various doctrines, that they may be easily comprehended, and systematically confuted.

In the following pages, therefore, I shall give a summary of your Creed in your own words, as collected from your detached remarks in the Introductory Essay formerly referred to, and then state the opinions you impute to us, and the consequences you attach to our doctrines, the former

of which we do not avow, and the latter we reject with as much disdain as yourself. The following, then, is a correct statement of your belief, with respect to the different points enumerated; a statement which you cannot deny without at the same time denying the genuineness of the Essay from which I quote.

THE CHARACTER OF GOD.—"It is said of God in the Bible, —'they that know thy name or character, will put their trust in thee.'—And what is that name? The same which was proclaimed to Moses, *Exod. xxxv. 6.* 'The Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, yet by no means clearing the guilty.' It consists of two parts: 'Forgiving iniquity'—yet 'not clearing the guilty.' The law is God's own character, and he who has God's law in his heart is conformed to God's character." —Introductory Essay to *Extracts of Letters*, pages xvii. lviii.

THE FALL OF MAN.—"The very meaning of salvation is the having confidence in God, and loving God, and giving him glory; for the fall of man consists in distrusting God, and being at enmity with God, and refusing Him glory.—Man became spiritually dead by disbelieving God's love, and man is restored to life only by believing God's love." Pages xxxii. li.

THE GOSPEL.—"The gospel is, 'God forgiving every man, having already condemned the sin of every man in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.' The name of God is just these two things in harmony, 'God forgiving sin,' and 'God not clearing the guilty;' and the *righteousness* of God is just the *harmony* of these two parts of the name of God; and thus the *righteousness* of God is just the very substance of the gospel, and the very thing which gives it its value, and its power to heal the soul.—The gospel is just a declaration that the blood of Christ has put away sin, and therefore he who does not know that his sins are remitted, does not believe the gospel.—If the belief of the gospel produces salvation, it must be because it produces information with regard to God, which will destroy the enmity of his heart. And what must the information be, which is capable of doing this? Nothing short of this, that God loves us, and has washed away our sins in the blood of Christ. If the gospel does not contain this information, it cannot destroy the

enmity of man's heart, and so it is not worthy of the name of gospel."—Pages lix. lx. xxxvii. lvii.

FAITH.—In the gospel, forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ is declared to *every man*, and therefore faith in the gospel is each man's belief that *his sins* are forgiven through Jesus Christ's finished work. He that does not believe this does not believe the gospel—he is yet an unbeliever.—The pardon of the gospel is declared to all men, and independently altogether of their own characters.—Repentance is just faith in the gospel.—Faith gives to pardon a moral influence by which it may heal the spiritual diseases of the heart." Pages xxxvii. xxix. lxi. Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, page 24.

ASSURANCE.—"Personal Assurance is nothing more nor less than the faith of the gospel.—Personal Assurance is not an advanced stage in the Christian life; it is the very first step out of unbelief." Pages xxxvi. xxxvii.

OBEDIENCE AND THE OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT.—"The only source of sanctification is the belief of personal forgiveness.—Love is the only true obedience to the law, and love is salvation.—Obedience itself is the ultimate blessing.—The blessedness which God's love has planned for men is a blessedness arising from partaking of his own holiness, and becoming the habitations of his own Spirit.—The Spirit of Christ is said to enter into the heart, only after the heart is opened by this belief of Jesus." Pages xliv. lvi. xxxix. lv. xlv.

ELECTION.—"God's love does not flow through the channel of election, neither does the gift nor the atonement of Christ. Where then is election? It is here, that when this love was poured on all, and this forgiveness sealed to all; and the power to believe it conferred upon all—and yet no man would believe it; when all loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil; when all with one consent began to make excuses; *then* the electing word came forth, saying, 'compel some to come in.' " Page lxix.

THE RESURRECTION.—"The death denounced by the law was just the separation of soul and body. This was the sentence on the whole race—and while it remained unreversed it must have kept every man in his grave—it must have lain on every man like a tomb stone—no one could have risen. But if death be the penalty, resurrection is the reversal of the penalty. This, then, is something that

all men get whether they believe in Christ or not ; and their getting this is a proof of their connexion with Christ, and their deliverance from the curse of the law through Him, in spite of their own unbelief." Pages xlviii. 1.

THE JUDGMENT.—"Death eternal is not a punishment under the law, but under the gospel.—Those who live under the dispensation of grace, and reject it, although they shall not be condemned for a broken law, shall be judged and condemned for a rejected gospel." Pages xlviii. 1.

Thus, Sir, I have given a brief outline of your religious creed, in your own words. In the form in which I have given your remarks, they may be more striking, and have the additional advantage of showing in short compass what you really do believe. In this form, however, the faults of your system are not, in some cases, discernible, for your general statements are more after "the form of sound words," than the illustrations you use in explaining your principles, or in drawing your inferences. This defect, however, will be in part supplied, by the use I shall hereafter make of your illustrations, to prove the errors you have adopted.

The Essay before me has two advantages:—it unfolds your own system, and likewise the opinions you entertain respecting the religion generally professed. And it must be acknowledged, that, whatever qualities you possess, charity is not with you a darling virtue. In your "Essay on the Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel," you merely stated your own sentiments, but in this you attack, with unmeasured severity, the opinions of those from whom you differ. The sentence you pronounce is general, the denunciation you utter, awful. There is, indeed, combined with your frown, a sigh heaved ; and then, with an unavailing interjection or two, we are left in the hands of the printer, fingering his notes of exclamation, and proclaiming to the world, that we are in "direct rebellion against God,"—"believe in a false gospel,"—and are "trampling under foot the

Son of God, and all that is contained in his incarnation; and death, and resurrection."

You are not, however, it seems, quite steeled against the tender sensibilities of the heart, or the sympathies of Christianity; for your better feelings have reminded you that such language "may appear harsh and presumptuous." But this you soon obviate, for you immediately add:—"I feel it to be the kindest thing that I can say, because I am persuaded that is the truth." On this point, what is truth? The word is truth; and if our sentiments are in accordance with that word, we require no pity from you; but the unmerited abuse contained in your "harsh and presumptuous saying" does require an apology. The opinions attributed to us we acknowledge neither in principle nor in practical effect; and therefore, either we are ignorant of our own opinions and practice, or you presumptuously attempt to describe what you do not understand. The following quotations from your Essay may be of use in bringing before the reader your views of the religion generally professed by Christians:—

"The general idea that men have with regard to religion, is, that it consists in their believing something, or doing something, in order to obtain from God forgiveness of their sins, and the enjoyment of security under his protection."* "A man's seriousness and earnestness in this religion do not change its character at all—it is a pure system of selfishness; and every step that he takes in it, is just a further training and hardening in selfishness."† "And this selfishness is not merely a negative offence, it is a direct rebellion."‡ "There is another obvious effect of this false scheme of religion yet to be mentioned:—and that is, the self-righteousness necessarily connected with it. So long as it is received as truth, that God's forgiveness is bestowed only on those who possess some particular quality, such as faith, or repentance, or sincerity,—so long are men necessarily compelled to regard their possession of these qualities as

* Page vi.

† Page viii.

‡ Page xi.

the ground of their confidence before God.”* “His belief” (that of the man who professes the commonly received religion) “is, that if he can acquire faith, he will be pardoned—and thus his endeavour is, to acquire faith, and to ascertain that he has acquired it. He is thus necessarily led to look *inward* for the ground of his confidence.”† “It is not what God is, but what he himself is, that is of importance to him.”‡ “His religion is, in fact, just a bargain between God and man, by which man seeks to secure his own interests.”|| “And thus man’s religion dishonours God, both in the attainment of its object, and in the means which it employs for attaining it. It considers God merely as a power that can inflict injuries, and bestow benefits. It does not consider Him as in himself the fountain of living waters. It does not make God’s character to be a matter of any importance. It does not consider him as a Father. It denies both his love and his holiness.—It tramples under foot the Son of God, and all that is contained in his incarnation, and death, and resurrection. This I say is man’s religion, whether it assumes the name, and uses the phrases of that religion which God has revealed; or takes any other name, and uses any other phrases. And this I believe to be the prevalent religion of our land,—taught from the pulpits and received by the people. I don’t speak of the worldly people, but of the religious people. This may appear a harsh and presumptuous saying, but I feel it to be the kindest thing that I can say, because I am persuaded that it is the truth.”§ “The great body of the religious world are seeking a personal safety, and not the glory of God,—they are seeking a selfish object by self-righteous means,—they are denying that Christ’s blood has put away sin, and they are endeavouring to put it away themselves by faith and prayers, and fears and doubts,—they are just saying, who shall ascend for us into heaven to bring down the Saviour,—or who shall descend into the deep to bring him up from the dead, or how may we do it for ourselves?”** “This is the leprosy which has overspread the land. And whence does it proceed? It proceeds from the voice of the shepherds, who tell the people, that although the gospel is a proclamation of God’s love, and of forgiveness of sins through Christ,—yet

* Page xiv. † Page xv. ‡ Page xvi. || Page xix.

§ Pages xx. and xxi. ** Page xxii.

that those only are loved, and those only are forgiven, who have faith in the gospel. I do not speak of the authorised standards of any church,—I speak of the religion taught to the people. This is the fountain-head of the leprosy,—and let the shepherds look to it, and let the flocks look to it. This doctrine is the standing doctrine of the land, and it is nothing else than making the cross of Christ of none effect. It is a false gospel, which mocks man with a semblance of good, but gives him nothing. It makes the whole matter a per-adventure. It takes the name of good news, yet it tells nothing which can give peace to a soul. I may believe it all, and yet remain without peace. Let the shepherds look to it—let them look to the state of their flocks, and whilst they do so, let them ponder that word, ‘If they had stood in my counsel, and caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings.’ Jer. xxiii. 22. And there is a word in that same chapter for the flocks, which they also would do well to mark. They must judge of the doctrine which they hear by the standard of the word of God. They will be judged by the Bible—and God says of the truth, that it is easily discernible from falsehood, for, ‘What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord ; is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces ?’ And let all look to that word, ‘Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.’ ”*

The above, Sir, are your opinions of the religion commonly professed, given in your own words. In your enquiries about our religion, you have been most unfortunate in meeting with people who seem not to know what or why they believe ; many, however, who are not of the “*Illuminati*” could have given a reason of the hope that is in them, and their sentiments would have been very different from those with which you have charged “the religious people of this land.” In the workings of your mind you have planned “a grotesque patch-work” of religion, to serve as a foil to your own system ; and this, the creature of your fancy,

* Pages xxiii. xxiv. and xxv.

you impute to our religious people. You are "confident that none will deny it who know the religious people of the land;" but *confidence* seems an *essential* of your mental frame before God and man. Assuming, however, what is our province, we deny that such a religion is taught from our pulpits, acknowledged in our church standards, or received by our religious people. Of this I shall endeavour to convince you when I examine the errors of your system, and I trust you will find that you are not only mistaken in your opinion of our ground of confidence before God, but that the very objections you urge against our opinions have an immediate connection with your own system. I shall, therefore, in vindicating the "Religion of the Land" from your misrepresentations, state what it is, and then refute the errors of your creed in the order of the quotations which I have made from your Essay.—[See page 10.]

THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

The character of God is displayed in his natural and moral attributes. The operation of these appears in his works, and in his dealings towards his intelligent creatures ; but his natural, and some of his moral attributes, are only partially developed, unconnected with redemption. There is, even in Providence, only a limited unfolding of his moral perfections. Through Redemption only, God is exhibited as wise, just, and merciful. Wisdom consists in the choice of good ends, and in the selection of the best means by which to accomplish these ends. The glory of God was the great end of Creation and of Redemption, and, this completed, all is accomplished which his wisdom intended. Justice applied to a lawgiver, is a term which denotes the act of bestowing rewards for obedience, and of inflicting punishment for disobedience. Without rewards and punishments, a law is a dead letter. God's right to place a creature under conditions, is undeniable. A creature, in the nature of things, cannot be his own lawgiver. His derived existence necessarily implies submission to the will of his Creator.—The same justice which authorised God to lay man under conditions, binds him, as a lawgiver, to honour that law which he has given him for the regulation of his conduct.

In the proceedings of God towards the fallen angels, we have a striking display of his justice. As their Creator, Preserver, and unceasing Benefactor, he had a just claim

to all their services. As long as they continued obedient, they had a right to the reward of obedience, and this, from the justice of God, they received. Obedience secured their possession of happiness, and disobedience subjected them to the loss of God's favour. The justice of God, therefore, is strikingly manifested in the happiness which the angels, who kept their first estate, still enjoy, and likewise in the awful punishment which those endure, who, for their disobedience, "are reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day."

Truth and Justice are so blended, that the operation of the one implies the existence of the other. The principle which influences any being to act justly, inclines him to adhere to truth in all his declarations. Justice denotes actions done agreeably to an established rule. Truth requires a conformity between declarations made, and actions performed. The principles which influence any being to maintain a conformity between declarations made, and actions performed, will likewise influence him not to deviate from the rule by which his actions should be regulated. Justice and Truth, however, though originating from the same principles, have a distinct operation, and are therefore considered as separate attributes in the moral character of God.

Keeping in view this distinction, we remark, that before man's fall and recovery, the truth of God was not exemplified by action. Man being a creature of God, was necessarily placed under a law, and this law had necessarily connected with it rewards and punishments. Happiness was the reward of obedience, and "In the day thou eatest, thou shalt surely die," or better rendered, "Dying, thou shalt die," was the threatening of the punishment denounced for disobedience. So far as we know, the rewarding and punishing of the angels was an act of justice merely, but from this declaration of God to man, his truth, if man disobeyed, would be manifested. When man, therefore, disobeyed, not only the justice, but also the truth of God, required the infliction of the threatened punishment. Reason,

left to form her own conclusions, could have anticipated no escape from punishment. All other created intelligences, owing their entire obedience to their Creator, could, according to the just deductions of reason, offer no atonement for man's disobedience. The legitimate result of man's reasoning would be despair. Had God, therefore, left man to reap the bitter fruit of his own doings, the truth of the declaration, "Dying, thou shalt die," would have been accomplished, not only in the dust returning to the earth as it was, but in the spirit ascending to God to receive its awful sentence—enduring the second death—ever dying, and never ceasing to exist.

Before the fall of man, and till the promise of deliverance from the consequences of the fall, the attribute of mercy in the divine character was not prominently brought into view. Modifications of this attribute, indeed, appeared in God's works, but it was fully developed only in man's redemption. Till God said, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," the attribute of mercy had only an abstract existence in the moral character of God, and received no direct manifestation in the fulfilment of any anticipated promise, or the completion of any action.

This attribute is called by old Divines the darling attribute of God, because, before deliverance was promised to man, the proceedings of God exhibited him as a stern law-giver, following every infliction of his law with merited punishment, and from the effects of this attribute, he is presented to our minds as a father full of tender relents towards his rebellious offspring, pitying them and offering them pardon. The application of this term to the mercy of God, has a tendency, however, to give the mind improper ideas of God's moral character; for the other attributes of God are as necessary in our redemption, and should be as dear to us as the attribute of mercy. God manifest in the flesh is a great mystery of godliness, not because it develops an attribute in God's character hitherto practically unknown, but rather because it shows this attribute operating to the

glory of God, and for the good of man, in harmonious union with his other attributes. It is a correct sentiment of the poet, that

“A God all mercy is a God unjust.”

Had it been possible for God to pardon man merely by an act of mercy, his declaration concerning the effects of disobedience would have been contradicted, and his conduct in placing man under a law, the violation of which he did not punish, would have been arbitrary, and directly opposed to the rules of justice. It is therefore not because God is merciful in redeeming man, that we should admire his character, but because the attribute of mercy operates consistently with those of truth and justice. In redemption, God appears not only merciful, but also wise, just, and true.—Considering God merely as a merciful Being, we may, from *selfish* motives, rejoice in the effects of his pardon, and, embodying our feelings in the heavenly song, say, “Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever;” but never, unless we see the operation of all God’s attributes in our redemption, “beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,” can we lay aside *selfish* feelings, and praising God, not only for what he *has done for us*, but for what he *is in himself*, say, from being transformed into the same image, “Holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come.”

I am inclined to attach very great importance to the work of redemption, as illustrative of God’s moral character.—You attach too little importance to it on this account, and seem to consider it almost exclusively as a display of goodness, and limit its effects to the deliverance of man from the curse of a violated law. I consider it a “great and marvellous work,” not only affecting the destinies of men, and displaying to them God’s moral character, but likewise showing to an astonished universe, that in the character of God, “mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace

embrace each other." Rejoicing in Redemption as proclaiming "peace on earth and good will to men," we should rejoice at the same time to consider it as bringing "glory to God in the highest" in every part of the universe. We know not whether in the universe another world has revolted from God. The probability is, that this is the only rebellious province throughout his vast empire; and the knowledge of God's dealings towards us, will have given to the inhabitants of other worlds cause to admire the character of God, so gloriously displayed in our redemption. Thus far we know, that angels pry into the plan of redemption, and find so much in it as engrosses the most of their attention, and will not cease to be the subject of admiring wonder and praise.

When we consider, therefore, that the universe is peopled with a crowded population, and that every star is the centre of a system containing beings capable of adoring their Creator, God's permitting man to fall, may serve a most important purpose in the economy of heaven. In God's dealings towards us, not only angels, but the intelligent inhabitants of millions of worlds may learn that in the Divine administration, justice and mercy are intimately connected. The fall of man may serve the most important purpose of illustrating the character of God to every created intelligence throughout the boundless extent of space, and even man, who by his apostacy has become a spectacle to an astonished universe, while he has reason to be humbled for his guilt, cannot complain of the economy under which, by the goodness of God through Christ, he is at present placed. He has indeed lost innocence and Paradise, but he may be a gainer by this very circumstance. We have no reason to suppose that although Adam had continued obedient, he would have received any other enjoyments than those which the earthly Paradise afforded. The glory, however, of the Paradise below was insignificant when compared with the glory of the Paradise above, which excels. The employment of Adam in the terrestrial Paradise was rational, de-

lightful, and sublime, but far inferior to those occupations which will, through eternity, engage every believer. Adam's knowledge of God's character was extensive, but limited when compared with that which every believer will hereafter possess. Adam held Paradise on conditions—Christ is the believer's guarantee for Heaven's glory and its eternal stability.

No believer in Christ, therefore, will have reason to regret the fall of man, and if unbelievers will fret and rage against our first parents for exposing them to condemnation, and against God for permitting man to fall, we hesitate not to tell them that such language resembles the daring impiety of hell, and that Satan again speaks, not through a serpent as before, but through a created intelligence, made his willing slave. Yes, Eve did pluck the forbidden fruit, and brought upon herself and her posterity the curse of a violated law, but by the tender mercies of our God, if she was allowed to fall, she has been the selected medium through which a deliverer has been sent, who, by his obedience and death, has purchased, for true believers, a Paradise more excellent and enduring than that which she lost by disobedience. Yes, God did permit our apostacy, but by the very wrath of Satan he has illustrated his character in a new and striking light, and like an affectionate father, he now appears beseeching his fallen offspring to turn and live, and he will render unto them double for all their sins.

Now, Sir, in exact agreement with this view which we have presented of man's fall and redemption, illustrating God's moral character, is the language of the inspired volume. Revelation is an unfolding of the mighty work which develops the character of God, in promises, types, and prophecies, all referring directly or indirectly to the Saviour, in whom they have, or will have, a completion. Revelation records difficulties of the greatest magnitude overcome—unfolds a series of events the most remarkable—exhibits agents the most honourable in active operation, and an end accomplished astonishingly great.

If, on the other hand, we admit only the partial view of the plan of Redemption which you seem to entertain, and suppose it merely a display of his love to our apostate race, what new manifestation of God's character was it fitted to give to those intelligent creatures who surround the throne of God? Of his love they had already had the amplest experience—it was displayed to them in that state of happiness in which they were created, and in the continuance of that happiness—all the bounties which his beneficence is lavishing upon them, are so many proofs of a love, boundless as the immensity of space, and lasting as the throne of the Eternal. Of his justice, they had indeed a striking display in the punishment of those of their number who had impiously dared to lift up the weapons of rebellion against the Majesty of Heaven; but still they had only a partial knowledge of the character of God. Of his truth they could know nothing. If they had any ideas of his mercy, they would be vague and imperfect. They could form no conception of the character of God, as a Being of infinite justice, and at the same time the Saviour of an apostate world. All their reasonings on this subject would end in doubt, perplexity, and darkness. The goodness of God, they might suppose, would incline him to pity his rebellious offspring, but a violated law called aloud for satisfaction, and the honour, the justice, and the truth of God as a lawgiver, required the infliction of the threatened penalty. It is only by viewing Redemption as having for its grand end the manifestation of God's moral character, that we can imagine it to be the proper subject of adoring praise to those pure and holy intelligences who are said to “desire to look into”* the mysteries of man's redemption. Considering it, not merely as a display of God's love, but as an exhibition of

* 1 Peter i. 12. *Εἰς ἃ πιθυμοῦσιν ἀγγελοι παρακύψαι.* The expression is very strong, implying great earnestness, and may be rendered “desire to pry into with downward gaze.”

the beautiful harmony subsisting between the attributes of mercy and justice, then and then only can the inhabitants of the celestial Paradise, from its contemplation, break forth into rapturous strains of adoration.

The character of God is admirably described in the passage which you quote from Exodus,* and this description contains in it every modification of God's moral character. The terms, however, are of a general kind, and to this general definition the modifications may be either appended from Scripture, or adapted to suit peculiar views. You proceed upon the latter method, for, assenting to the general definition given in the passage, in explaining it in your own language, you limit the character of God to suit your own system. The first part of God's character you explain by love, and in this you are nearly correct. The character of God is love, but you apply it in a manner in which perfect love cannot operate. The attributes implied in the terms "merciful," "gracious," &c., are all modifications of love. Love is the generic term, these are the specific. Love, however, as applied to God, is explained by benevolence. "God is love,"† *αγαπη*, the same word which is employed in 1 Corinthians xiii, implying a disposition to do good—kindness in exercise, and proving its existence by good actions performed. We agree, then, in attributing love to God, but we differ in our views of its operation. You extend its effects to all—good and bad; I limit its operation to those whom God can, in consistency with his character, view with complacency. Love implies approbation of its object, and in that object there must be some quality to produce the affection. In the Bible I read of various kinds of love, but no where of the love you describe. There are, indeed, ge-

* Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7.—"The Lord God, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; yet by no means clearing the guilty."

† 1 John iii. 16.

neral views of God's love in the Bible, but every where limited in the context, or by the general bearing of Scripture. "The tender mercies of God are over all his works."* In his essence he is love, "yet he is angry with the wicked every day."† "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity."‡ "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord;"|| and while he sees no iniquity in Jacob, he is a consuming fire to all the workers of iniquity. According to your system, God loves all, and from this love there is a general pardon extended to all. I can understand how God loves those to whom righteousness is imputed, but do not comprehend how he can love those towards whom he can have no feelings of complacency. Love, even in a human being, is exercised only towards those who possess, or seem to possess qualities similar to those which we reckon valuable; and in God there is no darkness—he must know the exact spiritual state of those whom he loves, and he can love none but "those who are the called according to his purpose." You suppose he has the disposition of love even to those who are wicked, and to them extends pardon. This he cannot have, and though all things to him are possible, yet in his character there can be no contradiction. A king may pity a criminal whom he cannot pardon, but he cannot love one who has so violated the laws of his country as to merit death. If he does, it implies imperfection, for the law of the land, as founded in equity, he must love, and love towards a criminal who must die to honour the violated law, implies a hatred of the law which deprives him of a person whom he loves. In God there is no imperfection—his law is a counterpart of his own nature, holy, just, and good; and those who will not allow the law to be honoured by accepting of the surety provided, must endure the consequences of a broken law, and though they may receive his pity, cannot enjoy his love. He has

* Psalm cxlv. 9. † Psalm vii. 11. ‡ Psalm v. 5. || Prov. xv. 8.

no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but as his law is a transcript of his character, though in essence he is love, yet he cannot love those in whom there is no quality, inherent or imputed, which he can view with complacency.

In the passage quoted from Exodus, the other part of the character of God is, "not clearing the guilty." These words import the exercise of various attributes, as wisdom, justice, truth, &c., but you have limited their signification to holiness. Even to holiness, as a generic term, we could have no great objection, for to holiness can be traced many other attributes. You however do not give to it its full application. You look only on God, in the exercise of holiness, as dispensing blessings, and forget that as he is a lawgiver, the modifications of this attribute must appear in a variety of forms. "Not clearing the guilty" you restrict to the sufferings of Christ, and it is a known feature of your system, that you view God as a father of mercies but not as a lawgiver of infinite perfections. We agree, therefore, in attributing holiness to God as an essential attribute, but differ widely in our ideas of the mode of its operation. You seem as if you were speaking to men in a state of innocence, and forget that in "not clearing the guilty," God must prove that his law is holy, just, and good, in enforcing its penalty. The language you employ is unfit to apply to God as the righteous governor of a revolted world—it is unfit to be addressed to man in his present state—and what decidedly marks its impropriety, it is wholly unlike the general language of Scripture. You sing ever of mercy, but seldom of judgment, and in a way so unlike the Bible, that I know not if you have yet made up your opinions on God's character as a lawgiver, or on the nature and duration of future punishment.

The term holiness expresses merely the nature of God's character, and not the manner of its operation in not clearing the guilty. Holiness is a quality in possession, which manifests itself in God towards the guilty, in wisdom unerring, truth unsullied, and justice inflexible. Unless we

view holiness in these modifications, it is only an abstract quality in the Divine character, and as such, neither adapted to man in his imperfect state, nor to God as his righteous lawgiver. The sacred record, therefore, brings God before our minds as he actually is connected with man in his present state, dispensing rewards and punishments in the exercise of a love and a holiness very different from those which your pages represent. He loves those only who bear his image, and in not clearing the guilty, every attribute of a lawgiver of infinite perfection is displayed in enforcing the sanctions of a law, holy, just, and good. Holiness is essential to his character in distributing rewards and inflicting punishments, and hence, while he is on the one hand, "the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness;" on the other, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne: mercy and truth go before his face."

In this world we see as through a glass darkly; and know only a part of God's character, but in heaven the redeemed will know even as they are known. With minds strong in their conceptions, expansive in their flights, and correct in their conclusions, they will be able to comprehend how, in Redemption, the moral character of God is admirably harmonized. They will then know the evil nature of sin, and the astonishing love of the Godhead—they will then learn why angels were so often sent on embassies from heaven to earth—what constituted that mysterious something called the wine-press of the wrath of God, and what awful ingredients were mixed in that cup which agonized the Saviour in the garden, and in the agonies of expiring nature, made a dying but conquering Redeemer exclaim, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" They will then learn what took place in that important time called "the hour and the power of darkness," when a father, tender in pity, but inflexible in justice, laid on his own Son, our voluntary surety, the iniquity of us all—when the energies of hell were called into active operation, and the Saviour, though

willing to save and mighty to conquer, felt the work of man's redemption so difficult in the execution, as to force from him the thrice repeated prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me"—and when the earth, in tender sympathy with her suffering Lord, and indignant at hard-hearted man, became vocal, murmured forth her complaints, shook to her centre, and parted her rocks asunder.

This knowledge, according to your system, would produce in their minds merely higher degrees of love. This undoubtedly will be one of its effects, and while, as their hearts burn with love in thinking on what has been done for them individually and collectively, they are astonished at the work of Redemption, not from historical detail, but from an exhibition of the facts as they occurred, from the commencement of this work to its consummation, hear the burden of their song, and say if it is not the consideration of the character of God that calls forth their admiration: "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; *just and true* are thy ways, thou King of saints."*

As a necessary consequence of your mistaking the character of God, your opinions respecting his law are also erroneous. The character of a lawgiver has such a necessary connection with the laws he voluntarily enacts, that the one is a counterpart of the other. The law of God is holy, just, and good; and to enact good laws, a lawgiver must have wisdom to connect the means and the end, truth to give effect to his promises, mercy to incline him to pity and forgive, and justice to enforce the sanctions of his law. You are too much delighted with the attribute of mercy to allow the co-operation of God's other attributes in his dealings with man, and therefore you dethrone the God of the Bible, and set up in his stead an idol of your own fancy, merely to dispense blessings. Differing so widely from you in the definition of the law, I cannot of course agree with you in

* Rev. xv. 3.

its application. You in fact merge it into love, and love with you is only another term for pardon, and therefore, according to your system, the law, as a rule of life, is a dead letter to those who have accepted of the pardon. In the words of one of your friends, "We have nothing to do with the law, but with the Gospel." Your own words are nearly equivalent—"Eternal death is not a punishment under the law, but under the Gospel," and of course, as the gospel is defined by you to be neither more nor less than pardon, you have only to do with the act of the mind in embracing the pardon. Hence, you never in your writings speak of the law as a rule of life to believers, and in this you are at least consistent, for, holding a pardon of deliverance from the punishment of a violated law, and yet being in connection with that law, is a contradiction in terms. If an individual by an act of the mind can secure the pardon of a lawgiver, he by his own act makes the law a dead letter. You have secured the benefit of pardon by accepting it, and therefore in every sense of the words, you are free from the law—free from its condemnatory power, because you have accepted the pardon—free from it as a rule of life, because, independently of the manner of your life, the act of your own mind has put you beyond the power of the law, for being pardoned, you cannot, if language has any meaning, be condemned. The bearing of such a doctrine on morality, I leave to your own reflections. Some of your friends are fond of claiming connection with the supposed errors of Luther, and you need not be reminded of the abuse which Agricola made of his sentiments on this subject. As long as you indulge in them only as a theory, you may continue on the Lord's side, but Satan as an angel of light, may be, through your agency, secretly working in the children of disobedience, and new modifications of Antinomianism may not only be defended in principle, but embodied in practice.

The matter is very differently represented in the Bible.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit;”* but we can know that we have the Spirit, only by the fruits of the Spirit. And as no man is perfect, the law still has claims against the best of men, and therefore, in respect to themselves, as debtors to the whole law, they are never, in this world, free from the law as a ground of condemnation, but through Christ, who has honoured this law by his all-perfect righteousness, they are free from condemnation. Christ had the law within his heart, and as in him there was no sin, he took delight in doing the will of God, or obeying his law, and hence, as he walked after the law, for himself under the law there was no condemnation, and in bearing the condemnation of the law, he acted as our voluntary substitute. To every human being, “by the law is the knowledge of sin.” By comparing our character by the law, we perceive our sinfulness. “The law is the strength of sin,” offending sinful man by its strictness and its awful denunciations. We are dead to the law, and redeemed from under it, when we have infallible evidence that we are the sons of God, which assurance has been attained by many, and should be the earnest endeavour of every one to attain. “The law is our schoolmaster unto Christ,”†—teaching us what we are, and what we require from him, and when we are assured, by infallible evidence, that we are in him, we are not only free from condemnation, in fact, but we know it to our peace and joy. As a rule of life, the law is put into our hearts by God, when, by the operation of his Spirit, we conform to that law in our walk and conversation. “We are made free from the law of sin and death, by the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.”‡ By the covenant of grace, applied by the operation of the Spirit, we are delivered from the covenant of works, by which is death.

Scripture, taken in connection, furnishes a consistent

* Rom. viii. 1.

† Gal. iii. 24.

‡ Rom. viii. 2.

scheme, giving glory to God, and producing humility and dependence in man. And, from the very nature of a law, we see that the Scripture representation is correct. When a lawgiver annexes a penalty to a law, if that law is broken, he is bound to inflict the penalty. Suppose a lawgiver enacts a law, the penalty annexed to the violation of which is a year's imprisonment, every violator of the law must suffer this penalty. But should the lawgiver find that his law may be honoured by allowing one to undergo the penalty, who voluntarily offers to substitute himself for another who has violated the law, he may accept of the punishment of the substitute, and allow the guilty to escape. Still, however, the violator remains guilty with regard to the law, but he is free from its penalty, because the lawgiver, by pardoning him, has assured him that he will never enforce the claims of the law against him. God, in strict justice, annexed the penalty of death to the violation of his law. This penalty was incurred by man, and the justice of God required its infliction. Christ honoured the law by voluntarily undergoing the penalty which man had incurred,—and thus God is just while the justifier of sinners. In the eye of the law, however, man is still guilty, and every one whom God does not pardon and absolve from the incurred penalty, will be punished. A law, once broken, never ceases to condemn, and it is absolutely impossible for any one who has violated it, ever to be made innocent in its view. That I am correct in this statement of the law, is, I think, proved by the general bearing of Scripture language. Does not the Bible represent all unjustified persons as under the law and its condemnatory power; and does it not plainly declare, that those who are delivered from this condemnation, obtain their deliverance by the free grace of God, through the death of Christ? In the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans Paul expressly declares, that he was “sold under sin,” that sin dwelt in him, that he was brought into captivity to the law of sin; and in the bitterness of genuine sorrow he ex-

claims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" In the eighth chapter he exults on account of his deliverance. He tells us in the seventh chapter that he was "carnal, sold under sin;" and in the 6th verse of the eighth chapter he says, "To be carnally minded is death." Paul then, though an heir of glory, and one for whom, in one sense, there was no condemnation, was, in regard to the law, under sentence of death. How he escapes this sentence he tells us in the 33d verse, where he says, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." How he escapes the condemnation of the law he tells us in the 34th verse—"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." I may be told that my conclusions here are false, because the whole of the seventh chapter describes the state of an unjustified person, and not the state of Paul. Grant that Paul here assumes the language of an unjustified person, what will we make of the 22d verse? Does an unjustified person delight in the law of God? Does he ever utter such a complaint as we find in the 24th verse—"O wretched man that I am?" Does he ever utter the earnest question, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Is this the language of a man who is rolling sin as a sweet morsel under his tongue? Is it not rather the language of one who has turned from sin, but still finds its bitter remains lurking in his bosom?

Though a man is justified as Paul was, it does not free him from the law as a rule of life. Paul, though justified, required something more to fit him for heaven. And does not the Bible inform us that Christ did more than merely deliver his people from punishment? He also, it informs us, "purified to himself a peculiar people." His death, therefore, procured for them justifying and sanctifying grace. This is the reason why those who are under the sanctifying influences of his Spirit are said to die daily unto sin. This is the reason why their progress in the Christian life is compared to "the morning light, which shineth

more and more unto the perfect day." If mere justification could secure the happiness of heaven, then the unsanctified spirit might wing its way thither, how unfit soever it might be to associate with those who dwell around the throne of God. At what period of Paul's life he was justified we need not say. We know however that he was justified, and yet he still continued in one sense under the law. Paul being justified, became the subject of sanctification, in the gradual progress of which, the old man waxed weaker and weaker, and the new man daily acquired additional strength. This account of Paul's state explains satisfactorily in what sense sin dwelt in him, and how he at the same time delighted in the law of God.

Suppose that, in the course of your professional practice, you have occasion to witness the trial of two persons accused of a capital crime. The evidence produced against them is satisfactory, and as they are proved to have been equally implicated in the crime for which they are tried, they both receive sentence of death. Thus far they are alike. But let us follow them into the cells in which they are doomed to await the execution of the awful sentence; let us look into their bosoms, and perceive the different feelings which pervade them in this fearful crisis. The one is suddenly struck with a deep sense of the atrocity of the crime which he has committed. Shame, remorse, and contrition alternately overwhelm his mind—he perceives his guilt in its true colours, heightened with all its accompanying circumstances of aggravation, and feels himself to be a wretch unfit to live. These feelings naturally induce him to acknowledge that the law by which he is condemned is just, and that, consistently with the welfare of society, his crime could not be passed over with impunity. The other is possessed with feelings of a very different kind. Wrapped up in obstinate and hardened sullenness, he feels not his own guilt—he acknowledges not the justice of the law which has condemned him—he perceives not that it is necessary for the existence and well-being of society that vice should be

restrained, and virtue encouraged. He is grieved indeed, but he is grieved only because he perceives that his career of wickedness is cut short; and that he must submit to an ignominious death. The law which has condemned him he execrates as the capricious and cruel imposition of a malignant tyrant—he exclaims against the judge as being actuated by malice in pronouncing sentence against him. His heart, harder than the massy walls with which he is surrounded, is inaccessible to every appeal that can be made to it, and feels only that fiend-like combination of rage and fear which results from the anticipation of certain punishment. Suppose, farther, that our gracious Sovereign finds that without suffering the law by which these two individuals were condemned, to lose its force, he can extend to them his royal clemency. Actuated by feelings of pity, he does so. Both are pardoned, and set at liberty. But let us trace in their future history the different effects produced by the impressions made upon their minds when under condemnation. The one who was duly impressed with a sense of his own demerit, and of the justice of the law, is filled with the liveliest emotions of gratitude and love towards his humane Sovereign, who has graciously delivered him from the deserved punishment. Deeply sensible of the guilt, as well as the danger, of continuing in the practice of crime, the legitimate result of his feelings will be an amendment of his life. Perceiving the moral loveliness of that law which he had formerly violated, it will be his principal study to act up to its requirements, and to prove himself not unworthy of the mercy which has been extended to him. Very different, however, will be the conduct of the other. His heart is yet unsubdued, and he comes forth from his gloomy cell with the same feelings which he entertained when he entered it, except that he exults in his escape from the dreaded punishment. He may indeed feel something like gratitude towards his Sovereign for reversing his sentence, but as he acknowledges not the justice of that sentence, this feeling will not produce in him any sala-

tary effects. With a heart still at enmity with the law, he cannot be expected to be influenced by it in his future conduct. Breathing revenge against the law by which he was condemned, against the judge who passed sentence upon him, and against society at large, the probability is, that he will plunge more deeply than ever into crime, that he will proceed from one degree of wickedness to another, till justice again overtakes him, and, being now beyond the reach of mercy, he expiates his offences by an ignominious death.

Allow me, Sir, to apply this illustration. All men have broken God's law, and all are consequently under its condemnation. Different individuals, however, are differently affected by their knowledge of this condemnation. One man, having the eyes of his mind opened by the Spirit of God, is deeply impressed with a sense of guilt. Overwhelmed with shame, remorse, and contrition, at having violated a law which he now sees to be holy, just, and good—awakened to a true sense of his guilt, he can see no way of escape from the curse of the law which he has transgressed, and he at the same time feels that justice requires the infliction of that curse. In this awful moment, when he imagines he sees the sword of God's vengeance suspended over his head, the atonement of Christ is displayed to his view, he is informed that the Son of God himself has, in man's stead, honoured the law, and by so doing opened a way of reconciliation to the Father—he is directed to look to that God whom he has offended, as willing, through the obedience and sufferings of Christ, to extend the arms of his mercy unto him, to grant him the pardon of all his sins, to receive him graciously, and love him freely. What will be the natural effect upon the mind of this individual? Will not his heart, acted upon by the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, expand in lively emotions of gratitude and love towards him who spared not his own Son, and towards that Son, who voluntarily undertook to redeem guilty man from merited punishment? Will he not instantly betake himself to that blood of sprinkling which was shed for the

remission of sins? Will not his previously acquired perception of the justice and moral fitness of the law lead him to strive to attain a conformity to it, and consequently to that all-perfect Being of whose character it is a transcript?

Another man is under the same condemnation, but feels not his own guilt—he perceives not the justice and moral fitness of the law—he desires only to be freed from its condemnation, and from the consequences which he fears will ensue from his transgression. While he is in this state, some wholesale vender of the panacea of universal pardon tells him that God loves him, and has already pardoned him; and that if he will believe in the pardon he will be safe. Overjoyed at finding such an easy method of deliverance, he gulps the nostrum, and fancies himself secure. While his heart is yet unsubdued by divine grace—still at enmity with the law—he accepts the pardon. The simple act of his mind in believing this pardon, according to your system, places him in a state of security. But what effect can this accepting of the pardon have in subduing the enmity of his heart towards God and his law? What change can be produced in his conduct by his accepting a pardon which he knows is sufficient of itself to secure him from condemnation? I grant, indeed, that it may awaken in his breast a species of love, which may even induce him to break out into a song of praise, but it will be like that of the Israelites when delivered from the dangers of the Red Sea—they praised God for having delivered them, but soon evinced the enmity that reigned in their hearts, by their murmuring at Marah. Having no idea of the justice of God's law, he will not strive to attain a conformity to it; on the contrary, by the legitimate result of his feelings, he will continue to roll sin as a sweet morsel under his tongue, and soothe his mind with the delusion that God has pardoned him, and that consequently he is in no danger of punishment. Many of those, indeed, who have adopted your system, are men of the most exemplary lives; this, however, is not in consequence of the system they have embraced, but

in spite of it. Their conduct was the same before they heard of universal pardon ; and what I have stated is the legitimate results to which your system would lead, if acted upon in practice, as it is embraced in theory.

The love which an intelligent creature in a state of innocence has towards his Creator, arises from admiration and gratitude combined. A consideration of the character of him who gave him being, has a direct tendency to awaken his admiration ; and the gifts which flow to him through his Creator's bounty, produce in his heart grateful emotions. The existence of qualities in the Creator, fitted to excite the feeling of admiration, does not necessarily secure the creature's love. These qualities must not have merely an abstract existence in the Divine character, else the feelings of the creature may end in mere admiration. If they operate for the welfare of the creature, he is led to take an interest in them, and thus he loves God for what he is in himself, and also for what he does to him.

His obedience, likewise, arises from the same twofold cause. He cheerfully obeys his Creator, not only because he sees in him every attribute which can command his admiration, but also because he sees all these in harmonious co-operation for his security and welfare. Thus, his obedience, the offspring of his love, arises on the one hand from a contemplation of God's character, and on the other from a sense that he is the recipient of his bounty.

To these two causes may be traced the love and obedience of angels. They cannot but admire God for what he is in himself, and a sense of his kindness towards them, ever recurring and never ceasing, must awaken in their breasts the feelings of gratitude. As long as they admire his character, and with grateful feelings, trace to his bounty all the gifts which they enjoy, so long are they under the principles which secure their obedience and their happiness.

Their love and obedience, however, though not disinterested, is not selfish. The term selfish in its general appli-

cation, implies more of *self* as an actuating principle, than is consistent with another's right. Were I to say that the love or obedience of an angel is selfish, I would utter a contradiction. An angel loves and serves God, not indeed without a view to his own interest, but chiefly in reference to the will of God; and as soon as he entertains a feeling of any other influence superior to that which arises from the character of God, he ceases to be a holy angel—he is a fallen spirit. In order, therefore, to render love and obedience acceptable in the sight of God, it is not necessary that they be disinterested, but they must be without selfishness. It appears, then, that selfish and interested convey very different ideas.* The one, attached to character, implies moral turpitude; the other does not. The obedience of angels is perfect, and yet not disinterested. They know that holiness is necessary to the continuance of their happiness, and yet they are not selfish. In the Scriptures, the interest which we have in religion is consistently appealed to in the recommendation of a holy life: “Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come;”† and yet this principle of obedience, though not disinterested, is not selfish, for those who are godly love God supremely, and to this love of God may be traced chiefly all their actions.—“Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”‡

We lay it down, therefore, as a distinction in language,

* “Love is a disinterested” [correctly speaking *not a selfish*] “passion, for the true lover would not fail to sacrifice his gratification, and in extreme cases his life, rather than be the cause or the witness of serious calamity inflicted on the object of his affections. Yet the parties themselves are ordinarily pursuing their own interests, and seeking their own enjoyment, and they cannot but know it.”—*Cloudesly, by Mr. Goodwin.*

† 1 Tim. iv. 8.

‡ 1 Cor. x. 31.

that *selfish* and *interested* convey different ideas ; and as a truth in morals, that love and obedience do not require to be disinterested, to render them acceptable either in the sight of God or man. You have not distinguished between *selfish* and *interested*, and at one time you characterise our system as one of “pure selfishness,” and at another, you say, that we seek by it our own interest. Our own interest, I grant, is connected with our love and obedience, but I deny that they are on that account selfish. They arise from the consideration of God’s character, as he is in himself, and from the manifestations of that character, in his dealings towards us. Our own interest acts only in unison with the great moving principle arising from the character of God. If our religion taught us, that a regard to our interest should influence our love and obedience more than a consideration of the character of God, then it would be altogether, as you call it, “a system of selfishness.” This, however, it does not do ; but this it does,—it teaches us to recognise a principle of action authorised in the word of God,—consistent in the creature towards his Creator,—and not affecting, in the slightest degree, the purity of the grand principle which should excite our love and obedience. From the motives which you impute to us, one would be apt to draw the conclusion, that the love and obedience of those who embrace your system, are entirely disinterested. This, however, is not the case ; for in your system you cannot proceed *one step* without interested motives, and these motives assuming the aspect of a ruling principle. What you impute, therefore, to our religion, I deny, and affirm that it is the characteristic feature of your own system—“a system of pure selfishness.”

There is a great tendency in the human mind to trace feelings to wrong causes. If the mind is in any manner gratified, we are inclined to take a favourable view of our principles of action, and may suppose that we are actuated by love towards our Creator, when, in fact, the principle of selfishness predominates. We wish to enjoy happiness, and

this wish may often arise from pure selfishness, even when the mind is perfectly satisfied with the purity of the exciting motive. To illustrate this remark, let us imagine a person, prepared by all the horrors of a dreadful situation, to enjoy the beauties of nature, and even in the midst of all which can excite the most pleasing emotions, every feeling may centre in *self*. Suppose a man, secluded from society, and living in a place where nature assumes her most terrific forms, where all is calculated to inspire dread, disgust, and horror. Around him spring up, in wanton growth, an endless variety of noxious weeds, herbs, and plants. Loathsome and venomous reptiles infest his walks, and obtrude even into his most secret retirements. Near his insecure dwelling is heard the savage howl, and the hideous yell of beasts of prey. The elements, combined in fearful commotion, rage with all their violence. The merciless tempest sweeps over the face of nature, and marks its track with ruin and devastation. The agitated sea heaves its billows, and dashes them with irresistible force against its rocky barriers. The awful peals of thunder reverberate from the gloomy caverns, and the glare of the vivid lightning brightens the lowering sky. The earth reels to and fro, and opens in frightful chasms. The volcano pours forth its streams of liquid fire, and spreads desolation around. The wishes of a person in such a situation, would all be centred in the desire of deliverance, and this desire, though it is the very reverse of disinterested, is not sinful. Place the same individual in a situation in which the bountiful hand of God has lavished the riches of his beneficence, and though his feelings may be of a very different kind, still they may be traced entirely to *self*. Let spring, bursting from the death of winter, adorn the face of nature with a verdure ever new and ever green; let summer in all its splendour reign, and in its fanning breeze, waft the rich perfumes of every flower, plant, and tree, whose fragrance delights the sense of smell; let autumn, rich in mellow and delicious fruits, pour forth the generous wine from its vintage, ever abundant and

inexhaustible. On every side a profusion of beauty meets the eye, and the ear is charmed with sounds more fascinating than that of Arion's lute. This man, by contrasting the misery of his former situation with his present happiness, may have within his breast emotions of the most delightful kind. These emotions, however, may be all traced to self-gratification, or to the satisfaction naturally produced in his mind by viewing the splendid combination of beauty spread out before him in rich profusion. The grand cause of all may not be recognised. The sun may rise, but if a cloud obscures it, Memnon's lyre is silent. A person may gaze on the beauties of the most enchanting scene, but if the grand cause of all is not perceived, all his delight will be expended on the surrounding objects, while his heart feels nothing of gratitude towards him who created both the scene to charm, and the mind to admire.

The God whom you have chosen is agreeable to your feelings, but has it never occurred to you that you may not have chosen the God of the Bible? You know there is such a thing as spiritual idolatry; and may not the incense of your offerings be ascending to an idol of your own formation?—The heathen worship their gods for the purpose of averting calamities and receiving benefits; and may not the same feelings be lurking in the chambers of imagery in the hearts of many in christianised countries? Your adherents talk much of love to God, but the principle of this love lies in an improper source. The greatness of God's gifts fills their hearts with love, and makes burning words, in soft accents, drop from their lips. Man is a strange creature. At one time he approves of the operation of principles in certain actions, which at another time, in similar cases, he condemns. In the one case, he reasons on rational grounds; in the other, from selfish principles.

Two men visit a Sovereign of excellent character, enjoy his society, and receive from him liberal gifts. While the one is ravished with the character of his Sovereign, the other is captivated with his gifts. Both are pleased, and both

loyal subjects. By a political convulsion, the monarch is driven into exile, and requires the aid of friendship. The two individuals have it in their power to afford relief, but the one does it not; and why? Because that which excited his love no longer exists. The other, in relieving the wants of one he loves, feels the truth of the saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The one individual had love, because *self* was gratified—the other, because his feelings of complacency were awakened by the contemplation of excellence of character. The one loved his Sovereign for what he had to bestow—the other for what he was in himself.

Two individuals have love towards God. Both are recipients of a bounty, liberal and unceasing. The one by an act of his mind, believes he is pardoned; the other, by the operation of the spirit, is renewed in the spirit of his mind—"beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, he is changed to the same image, from glory to glory." The one rejoices because he is secure; the other, in the harmony of attributes, which can extend a pardon in consistency with justice inflexible, and truth unerring. The one may have found peace with himself while the enmity of his heart against true godliness is unsubdued; the other has undergone a sanctifying process, which enables him, at every stage of his progress, to see more and more the evil nature of sin, and to comprehend in some degree, the extent of the love of God displayed in redemption. The one character is unmeet for the inheritance of the saints in bliss; the other is ripening for glory.

The selfishness, therefore, which you impute to "the religion of the land," has an immediate connexion with your own system. Followed in its ramifications, and traced in its legitimate bearings, it ends in selfishness, "pure selfishness." The chief principles which it holds out to the mind, depend for their influence on gifts received, and not on the character of him by whom they are bestowed. The confidence of which you boast, as a chief recommendation to

your system, is incompatible with that child-like dependence which necessarily exists between a loving father and an affectionate child. The character of God as he really is, is too overwhelming and humiliating for the feelings of self-complacency in which you delight to indulge. "In the Scriptures, wherever God is represented as appearing or speaking, every thing terrible in nature is called up to heighten the awe and solemnity of the divine presence. The Psalms and the prophetic books, are crowded with instances of this kind. 'The earth shook,' says the Psalmist, 'the heavens also dropped at the presence of the Lord.' And, what is remarkable, the painting preserves the same character, not only when he is supposed descending to take vengeance on the wicked, but even when he exerts the like plenitude of power in acts of beneficence to mankind. 'Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord; at the presence of the God of Jacob; who turned the rock into standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.' It were endless to enumerate all the passages, both in the sacred and profane writers, which establish the general sentiment of mankind concerning the inseparable union of a sacred and reverential awe with our ideas of the Divinity. It is on this principle that true religion has, and must have, so large a mixture of salutary fear."* "The religion of the land," not as you misrepresent it, but as it actually is, if really embraced and legitimately acted upon, brings the mind in close contact with a God of infinite perfections, and a law that will admit of no compromise, and the comparison levelling the spiritual pride of man to the dust, he is beautified with a salvation, which in its commencement, progress, and consummation, is directly opposed to selfishness. Embracing the character of God in all its parts, and in all its bearings towards man, this influential motive produces in him as a child, filial dependence, and this

* Burke on the Sublime and Beautiful, p. 78, Cupar Edition.

dependence, becoming more settled and serene as his character assimilates to that of God, it gradually approaches to confidence. When he looks to the character of God, he has confidence, but when he looks on himself, as a child he has only dependence, which may rise by degrees to confidence, but this is not connected either as the means or the end, with his spiritual safety. One who embraces your system, and acts consistently with its principles, cannot have filial dependence, and the confidence which he possesses, instead of resting in God's moral character, arises principally, if not solely, from the selfish feeling of a pardon embraced and secured. This confidence will of course produce a joy and a complacency, which may be fancied to be genuine gratitude, but has not the most remote bearing on the Christian graces necessarily connected with him in his present state. O Sir! it is painful to selfishness to be enduring continual mortification, and in the very act of rejoicing, to be trembling, to be prying into the plan of redemption with downward gaze, and ever finding that it passes knowledge, to find that around the record of God there are doubts and darkness, and that our assurance of eternal life is not to be attained without a struggle, great and continued. The children of Israel, on leaving Egypt, would willingly have celebrated God's kindness in songs of praise, had miracle after miracle, in rapid succession, put them in possession of the promised land; but the ways of God are not as man's ways, and man being led through a wilderness to the heavenly Canaan, murmurs against God, or forgetting that a proper state of mind is as necessary to enjoy a blessing, as that blessing in actual possession is to give happiness, he would secure the blessing without due mental preparation.

The inexperienced Theologian, therefore, eagerly embraces a system which flatters his self-importance, and allows him, in comparative ignorance, to indulge the contemptuous smile at the weakness of those who cannot, by a grasp of mind, bring the proceedings of the infinite Jehovah within

the limits of finite comprehension. The female heart, the natural retreat of confidence, in which there are the finest sensibilities of nature, mingled with the feelings of vanity, willingly closes with a system which delivers from the uneasiness of dependence, and secures a prize of inestimable value, and in the exercise of love and joy gives her a fancied superiority over those, who, considering "the ways of God to man," "rejoice with trembling." The wicked man, whose conscience, arrayed in tremendous majesty, places in black array his crimes before him; who feels the whispers of the still small voice more awful than the thunders bursting around him, and the anguish it occasions more poignant than the stings of scorpions; who can find no rest from its torments; when darkness, which puts a stop to the carnage of the field, affords him no respite; and light so pleasant to the eye cannot chase away for a moment his tormentor; when even sleep which kindly offers its aid to the distressed, is a stranger to his couch; looking around for rest he can find none, till, by embracing your pardon, his mind is freed from the cause of his disquietude, rests in the pardon abstracted from the character of God, and the gift serving as an opiate, lulls his mind to rest—his mental agitations calmed, the sense of security rises to joy, and embodies itself in praise, and then adieu to sighs and groans, and the heartlessness of "working out his salvation with fear and trembling." Making use, therefore, of your description of "the religion of the land," I apply it to your own system, and embodying my feelings in your own "Alas! alas!" ask, "is not this man's religion"—"a system of pure selfishness"—"trampling under foot the Son of God, and all that is contained in his incarnation, and death, and resurrection?"*

* See Appendix, Note A.

THE FALL OF MAN.

THE enjoyment of the earthly paradise, and the promise of eternal happiness, were given by God to man at his creation, on certain conditions. The nature of the conditions under which a creature is placed, depends not on his own will, but on that of a Creator possessing in perfection every moral attribute, and who can be pleased only with actions which are in perfect unison with these attributes. Man, therefore, when created, was necessarily subject to the will of God, and the obedience which he was required to yield, was such as an all-perfect Being might have been expected to demand. He was to love God with his whole soul, heart, and mind, and in proof of this principle influencing his will, to abstain from the fruit of a certain tree which had been placed in the garden of Eden. No other restrictions were laid upon him. Guarded by this one principle of love to his Heavenly Father, he was left to the free and full exercise of all his powers and faculties. The strength of this principle was sufficient to excite his gratitude, and to move him to the performance of every action in accordance with the will of his Creator and his own innocent nature. While his love was in lively exercise, the tree of knowledge of good and evil had not one tempting charm. As often as it met his eye, it reminded him of his probationary state, and of his being exposed to danger. The tree itself neither secured his innocence, nor promoted his fall, but so long as

its fruit remained untasted, it proved his innocence, and the influence of proper principles upon his conduct. The eating of the forbidden fruit was not the *cause* of man's fall, but the *act* which proved that he had fallen. Before he tasted it, he was under the influence of principles hostile to God, and the outward act only proved the existence of these principles. Although no such tree had been placed in paradise, the very circumstance of man's listening to Satan, and imbibing from him principles inimical to holiness, would in some way or other have proved his fallen nature, and exposed him to the curse of a violated law. The fall of man was necessarily connected with these principles, so that he fell as soon as he came under their influence. The taking of the forbidden fruit had also a connection with the fall of man, but this connection was circumstantial, not necessary. It was a stipulation on the part of God, and understood by man, that this fruit was to remain inviolate as long as he owned allegiance to the rightful authority of his Creator. The tree of knowledge was a covenanted proof of authority on the part of God, and of obedience on the part of man. It was a sign agreed on in a covenant entered into, and mutually acknowledged as a proof of the principles by which man was actuated. So long as his mind was under the influence of principles agreeable to the will of God, this tree, loaded with all its fruit, presented no charm, and had no power to entice, but as soon as principles opposed to the will of God usurped dominion in his breast, its charms became irresistible, and its enticements so strong, that the authority of God was forgotten, and the will of Satan predominated. The insinuation has frequently been uttered, that certainly it was no great proof of man's guilt, that he simply took of the forbidden fruit; or of God's mercy, that he annexed such a dreadful punishment to so trifling a violation. This insinuation is as false as it is wicked. God did not condemn man for simply taking the forbidden fruit, but for the awful crime of preferring the will of his worst enemy to that of his best and only true friend. Man's condemnation

indeed followed upon his taking the forbidden fruit, because this action was the evidence agreed on by mutual covenant, to prove his obedience or disobedience. The circumstance of God's placing him under this condition, instead of proving that his guilt was trifling, and God's dealings towards him severe, proves the very contrary. The nature of the objection implies that man was an easy prey to temptation. This circumstance, connected with the strong motives he had to obedience, proves at once his base ingratitude, and furnishes us with a striking display of the mercy of God in placing him under such favourable conditions. If his temptations to disobedience were few and weak, surely he was a kind Creator who did not expose the fallible creature he had formed to any trial to which his strength was unequal, and against which he was not fully prepared. If his motives to obedience were many and powerful, surely he was a merciful Being who furnished him with such motives. The fall of man, under such circumstances, decidedly proves the goodness of God in placing him under these conditions, and his own base ingratitude in disobeying when he was so favourably situated.

The fall of man you attribute to distrust, enmity, and want of love. Effects are often produced by immediate causes, which again depend on a more remote cause, and hence they are effects of a primary cause, and, combined with it, produce an ultimate effect. A man who rebels against his Sovereign, cannot love him supremely—he distrusts in some degree his goodness—and he may or may not have enmity towards him in his heart. His rebellion may be traced to an adequate cause, without distrust, want of love, or enmity of heart. These may be effects produced by a more remote cause. He may have both confidence and love towards his Sovereign, when another principle is at work within his breast, which in its operation, afterwards produces want of love, distrust and enmity. Pride may have been the primary cause of his rebellion, and if so, to impute his rebellion to want of love, distrust, and enmity,

would be to impute to effects, what is produced by a cause. Had pride not excited his rebellion, there would not have been within his breast, want of love, distrust, or enmity. This distinction, Sir, is of more importance than perhaps you are aware of. If the fountain is pure, the streams will be so likewise. To restore to his allegiance, a rebel who had revolted from his Sovereign from the operation of pride, it is not enough that means be used to awaken love in his breast, inspire confidence, or subdue his enmity. All this may be done, and the principle which excited him to rebellion still remain as strong as ever. Before he can be made from the heart a loyal subject, in some way or other the principle which first excited him to rebellion must be deprived of its power. It must either be gratified or subdued, and when it is so, he will love his Sovereign, and trust in him for the fulfilment of all his promises.

In general you are extremely happy in tracing effects to wrong causes, if in any way truth can be obscured, and your system illustrated. Your reason for tracing the fall of man to effects instead of the real cause, is very obvious. As are the causes which produced a disease, so must be the remedy. If want of love, distrust, and enmity, were the causes of man's fall, a remedy suited to counteract these, must be provided for his recovery. And such is the remedy, which, according to your system, has been provided. Salvation you make to be love and confidence. The Bible is a plain book, and in this case, as in every other, it requires no great acuteness, except to pervert its meaning. As man came from the hands of his Creator, we may learn from the nature of God's character, and from the sacred record, that his will was pure, and his passions entirely under the control of his reason. By listening to the seductions of Satan, his pride was excited, and he longed after more than he possessed. The cause which brought condemnation on the Devil, brought the same result on man. It placed them both in the condition of rebels against their lawful Sovereign. Read with an unbiassed mind, the whole account as record-

ed in Genesis, and then candidly say, if you have given a fair statement of the cause of man's fall ; and if you have not, is it a matter of wonder that you mistake the nature of the plan of recovery ? As man fell by pride, his recovery is effected by a cause producing the opposite feeling. Salvation, in its every step, is humbling to man. God mistakes not the principle which instigated man's rebellion, though you do. If the atonement is capable of producing only love and confidence, the cause which produced the fall may still operate. Man may have within him the very same elements of rebellion which produced his revolt. Your system, therefore, is wholly unsuited to man. It leaves him as it found him—a proud selfish being, rejoicing perhaps in the ravings of fancy about a pardon which he supposes he possesses, but with the principle of pride still lurking in his breast, and awaiting only an opportunity for fresh rebellion. The sinner who is awakened to a sense of his guilt by the humbling doctrines of the cross, is led to love that God who loved him with an everlasting love, and sent his Son to make an atonement for the sins of a guilty world. The principle of rebellion subdued, the graces of the Spirit grow and flourish in rich luxuriance. Genuine love and confidence, then, are effects arising from pride subdued. If “pride was not made for man,” that system is ill suited to man, which gives him love and confidence without showing him the true cause of his rebellion, and also what was done for him when Christ “humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

By saying that want of love, distrust, and enmity, were the causes of man's fall, you likewise confound cause and effect. Supposing that distrust and want of love did cause man's fall, enmity is the effect of these, and therefore it is improper to class them together as causes producing co-equally the same effect. Enmity implies hatred, and is the effect of distrust and want of love. Enmity cannot exist without distrust and want of love, but distrust and want of love may exist without enmity. These feelings may be only

in progress, and not have arrived at that stage which constitutes enmity. The want of accuracy in the use of terms may not in this case lead you so far into error as in the former instance, but it gives an incorrect view of the fall, and therefore should be corrected. Pride causes a man to love himself, and to have confidence in himself, and when this feeling is opposed, it produces enmity. The pride of a subject rising against his Sovereign, the Sovereign's claims present obstacles to his ambition, and in proportion as the subject loves himself, he wants love to his Sovereign ; in proportion as he has confidence in himself, he wants confidence in his Sovereign ; and the result of the opposition which he meets with in his rebellion is the feeling of enmity towards his Sovereign. So with man towards his Creator. The aspirations of ambition no sooner made him discontented with his condition, than distrust and want of love towards God moved in his breast; and whenever he found that his wishes and God's were diametrically opposed to each other, resembling Satan in the principle which caused his rebellion, he resembled him likewise in his enmity towards God. The Spirit which Christ has procured for believers, shows man what he is—this humbles him to the dust, and the more his pride is subdued, the more is he delivered from Satan's power—the more his humility increases, the more his love and confidence in God encrease, and changing sides in the spiritual conflict, from his love and confidence being taken out of himself and placed in Christ, he loses the love which he had towards Satan, and his trust in him, and from the opposition he meets with from him, the prevailing feeling of his heart towards him is enmity. Enlisted under the banner of the Captain of his salvation, he fights the good fight of faith, wrestles against principalities and powers, and goes on conquering and to conquer, till at length, the struggle over, and the warfare completed, he receives the crown of glory, and the palm of victory.

THE GOSPEL.

It appears, then, from the view which I have given of the fall of man, that its effects are of a twofold kind. It has produced in the heart of man enmity towards God, and subjected him to the penalty denounced against transgression. While man continued in a state of innocence, the aspirations of his soul spontaneously rose towards God; his inclinations directed him to that which accorded with the will of his heavenly Father; and his desires were all in unison with the holy law of love, imprinted by the finger of Deity upon his heart. He was in fact *at one* with God.—But no sooner did pride take possession of his heart—no sooner did he long to possess more than he enjoyed, than the whole tenor of his mind became changed—he no longer felt a longing after sweet communion with God; his inclinations no longer directed him to that which accorded with the will of his heavenly Father; his desires were no longer in unison with the holy law which was written on his heart; his inclinations became sinful, his desires unholy. He was at enmity with God. But this was not all. The law of God had annexed to it a promise of reward for obedience, and a threatening of punishment for disobedience. The reward which man would have received, had he obeyed the Divine law, we have reason to suppose, was the continuation of the happiness which he originally possessed; and had he retained his innocence, this reward would have been bestowed upon him as a matter of right. The condi-

tion on the part of man being fulfilled, the reward would follow as a necessary consequence of the justice of God. In the same manner, it is evident, that when man failed to obey the Divine law, he necessarily became subject to the penalty.

The design of Christ's atonement was to counteract the effects of the fall, and this it can do, only by subduing the pride and enmity of man's heart, which the fall produced, and liberating him from the penalty which by the fall he incurred. Some Divines represent the offence of man as a debt which he owed to God, and the atonement as a payment of that debt, by which payment the original debtor is liberated. This view of man's offence, and of the atonement of Christ, is highly objectionable. It not only confounds the payment of a debt with the satisfaction of a violated law, but destroys the doctrine of salvation by grace. A pecuniary debt and the violation of a law are very different things. If I owe you £100, and a third person gratuitously pays the debt for me, you have no further claim against me, and I can, as a matter of right, demand a discharge. Your granting of this discharge is no favour on your part, you cannot, in justice, act otherwise, for as I owed you a sum of money, and as this sum of money has been rendered to you, we then stand upon the same footing towards each other as we did before the debt was contracted. In like manner, if man's offence be viewed in the light of a debt, and the atonement as a payment of that debt, then every one for whom Christ died, must receive from God, as a matter of right, the reversal of the sentence of condemnation, and the enjoyment of happiness, independently of the grace of God, and unconnected with any change upon his own heart. This is evident from the very nature of the case, for if man had incurred a debt to God, and Christ has discharged that debt, man is then placed on exactly the same footing towards God as he was before the debt was contracted, and consequently is, in strict justice, entitled to the same advantages as he would have received, had the debt never been con-

tracted. That he has not himself paid the debt is no objection, for as a creditor requires only an equivalent, it makes no difference whether this equivalent is rendered by the original debtor, or by a third party.

It is very different with the violation of a law. Every law supposes a penalty annexed to it for the purpose of enforcing obedience to its injunctions. A law without a penalty annexed for disobedience, is, in the very nature of things, worse than useless. The design of a lawgiver in annexing a penalty to a law, is to secure the authority and stability of his government. Every violation of the law is a direct attack upon his government, and, by suffering the violator to escape with impunity, the authority of the lawgiver is weakened. Repeated violations would, if permitted, bring his government into contempt, and at last, end in its total subversion. To prevent this, punishment must be inflicted for every transgression, that others may be deterred from new violations. Suppose a lawgiver enacts a law, and annexes the penalty of a year's imprisonment for each violation. If a person violates this law, he cannot render any satisfaction to the lawgiver. He cannot, as in the case of a debt contracted, render an equivalent. The law is broken, and the offender, by breaking it, has contracted guilt which he cannot cancel, or bring himself into the same state in which he was before his transgression. That others, however, may be deterred from imitating his example, and that the authority of the lawgiver be not weakened, justice requires that the penalty be inflicted. When the offender has satisfied the law by bearing the punishment, the law is honoured, the authority of the lawgiver is secured, and the offender is liberated. By satisfying the demands of the law, however, he has not become an innocent person; he is still an offender, and no punishment that can be inflicted upon him can restore him to the state in which he was before the offence was committed.

God, in the exercise of that authority which, as Creator, he possesses over his creatures, imposed upon man a law

which he was perfectly able to obey. To this law he annexed the penalty of death. Man violated the law, and consequently became subject to the penalty. No effort on his part could remove this penalty, or restore him to the condition in which he was before his transgression; he could render to God no equivalent for his offence. God had a right to all his services, and even although man could have rendered obedience to the Divine law for the future, still his former offence remained unexpiated, and by him inextinguishable. He might indeed have borne the punishment, and had the punishment been inflicted upon him, the law of God would have been honoured, and his authority as a lawgiver established; but this punishment being death, the infliction of it would have precluded the possibility of man's being ever able, for the future, either to render obedience or to enjoy happiness. The truth, the justice, and the authority of God as a lawgiver, demanded the infliction of this punishment. The violated law required to be honoured, and this could be done only by the full and uncompromising infliction of the penalty. The moment man fell, the gates of heaven were barred against every individual of the human race, and so they must for ever have remained, had not our help been laid upon one, able and mighty to save. All things are indeed possible for God, and it is not for us to conjecture whether he could not, by any other means than the atonement of Christ, have rescued our fallen race; this however we know, that he cannot act inconsistently with his moral attributes, and in this view he could not, by an act of indemnity, have restored man to happiness without an atonement. To suppose so, would be to render the truth and the justice of God an empty name, to destroy the consistency of his moral attributes, and to ascribe imperfection to him who "is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." God is immutably perfect in all his attributes, and cannot exercise one attribute at the expense of another; while he is infinitely merciful, he is at the same time infinitely just and true, and therefore, can never exercise mercy

except in strict conformity to truth and justice. Man, therefore, must have been for ever excluded from happiness, had not God, in the exercise of his infinite mercy, interposed in his behalf. Looking down from the throne of his majesty, and seeing that "there was no eye to pity, and no arm to help, his own eye pitied, and his own arm brought salvation." He said, "Save from going down to the pit, I have found out a ransom." And how did he deliver? Draw near, O sinner! and in the plan of redemption behold the ineffable love of God, a love stronger than death, higher than heaven, and more lasting than the pillars of the universe. "Hear, O heavens! and give ear, O earth!" "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Christ honoured the law in two respects. It was necessary for God, in vindication of his justice, to prove that the law which he had given to man was holy, just, and good, and such as man, in a state of innocence, could have obeyed, even under temptation. This was effected by the active obedience of Christ. Being "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," in him the law, though exceeding broad, was completely fulfilled, and therefore, in doing what man should have done, he honoured the Divine law by showing that it was well fitted for man, and such as he could have obeyed in his original state of innocence. By his passive obedience, he endured the penalty which we had merited, and by so doing, satisfied the demands of a violated law, and gave glory to God by honouring that law which we by sin had dishonoured.

Christ's atonement effects two things. It frees from the penalty of a violated law, and procures the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, to restore that relish for holiness which man has lost by the fall, and to render him meet for the inheritance of the saints in bliss. Christ, by satisfying the demands of the law, opened up a way in which God could, in strict conformity to his truth and justice as a perfect lawgiver, extend his mercy to fallen man; he removed

the moral barrier which must for ever have excluded every human being from happiness; he unbarred the gates of heaven, which had been shut in consequence of the fall. Thus in one sense, the atonement of Christ is *universal*, while in another it is *limited*. *It is universal in its sufficiency, and limited in its application.* The mind naturally revolts at the idea of Christ's sufferings being an exact equivalent for the sins of the elect. The atonement of our blessed Lord is sufficient to save the whole human race. That all are not saved is no objection to this. Christ, by his atonement "magnified the law, and made it honourable," and by so doing, enabled God to save whom he would, in strict conformity to his moral attributes. God however, as the rightful Sovereign of the universe, can dispense according to his own good pleasure, the blessings procured by Christ for sinners. It is his part to act, and ours to acquiesce with submission in his proceedings, and to receive with gratitude the blessings which, through Christ, he bestows upon us. That the blessings procured by the atonement are not bestowed upon all, is a fact clearly revealed in Scripture, and knowing this it becomes not us to arraign the sovereignty of the infinite Jehovah. "Who art thou, O man! that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay?"*

This view of the atonement affords a key to those passages of Scripture in which Christ is said to have died "for all men," "for the sins of the whole world," &c., and reconciles them with others in which the blessings of the atonement are limited to a particular class of individuals, or in other words, it shows how by the atonement God *may* save all; and yet *does* not save all—how Christ died for all, and yet all do not receive the benefits of his death. In endeavouring to prove that God loves all men, and pardons

* Rom. ix. 20, 21.

them in consequence of the atonement, you lay great stress upon that text, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* That the term "world," however, is used in this passage in a limited sense, is evident from the analogy of many other passages in which the same term is applied in such a way as cannot admit of any doubt of its limitation. In the verse following that to which I have adverted, it is said that God sent his Son, "that the world through him might be saved." You will readily grant that all men are not saved, but observe that it is the *same world* which it is said Christ came to save, as God is said in the 16th verse to have loved. "God loved *the world*;"—and sent his Son, "that *the world* through him might be saved." If it signifies all men in the 16th verse, it must do so likewise in the 17th, and this will lead directly to the doctrine of universal redemption, which although you do not profess to believe, I am at a loss to see with what consistency you can deny. In the 16th verse it is said that the purpose for which God sent his Son was "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This phrase is undoubtedly meant to convey the same idea as the phrase in the 17th verse, "might be saved," and if so, it follows that those whom Christ came to save, and who we have shewn are the same as those whom God loved, are the same likewise as those who are said "not to perish, but have everlasting life, or in other words, they are those who believe. In the following passage, the term *world* is used in a manner which renders it impossible that it can signify all men. John, speaking of himself and the believers to whom he is writing, says, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness,"† or *in the wicked one*. That the term here must be understood in a restricted sense, is evident, for the

* John iii. 16.

† 1 John v. 19.

apostle has excepted himself and those to whom he is writing, under the term "we." His meaning undoubtedly is, We believers know that we are of God, and the rest of the world lieth in wickedness.*

The term *world* is likewise frequently applied in the New Testament to the Gentile nations in contradistinction to the Jews. This I conceive to be its meaning in 1 Corinthians i. 21, "The world by wisdom knew not God," as also in 1 John ii. 2, "And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." In the first clause of this verse, the apostle is speaking of Christ's being a propitiation for the sins of the Jews, but to humble the national pride of many of them who supposed that the benefits of Christ's atonement were to be confined to the seed of Abraham, he adds, "And not for ours only," not for the sins of us Jews only, "but for the sins of the whole world," for the Gentile nations as well as the descendants of Abraham. There is not the slightest ground for arguing from this passage that any of the benefits of Christ's atonement are bestowed upon every individual of the human race; the apostle merely alludes to the two great classes into which mankind were at that time distinguished, without making any reference at all to individuals.

But even although we should allow that the term *world* in John iii. 16, is to be understood in its widest sense, still it cannot be proved that it embraces every individual. In Luke vii. 5, The elders of the Jews say of the Centurion whose servant Christ healed, "he loveth *our nation*, and hath built us a synagogue." No one can suppose from this that the centurion loved every individual Jew—that he loved the most profligate wretch as well as the most virtuous person—the meaning undoubtedly is, that he loved the Jews as a nation, without any reference being made to particular individuals. Although the greater part of the Jews might

* See also John vii. 7.—xii. 47.—xv. 19.—1 John iii. 1.

be men of such characters as rendered it impossible for him to love them, or to regard them with complacency, still we see no impropriety in this instance, in the general assertion, that he loved *the nation of the Jews*. In like manner we may, with the strictest propriety, say, that a man loved a family in distressed circumstances to such a degree, that he submitted himself to great personal inconvenience in order to benefit that family, but does it from this follow that he loved every individual member of the family? This may or may not have been the case, but it is not implied in the general declaration, that he loved the family. Had it been said, however, that he so loved the family, that he appropriated for its use a considerable sum of money, that whoever of the family believed that he was able and willing to relieve them, and implicitly trusted in him for assistance, should receive his bounty, and be relieved from their difficulties, we would have no difficulty in understanding the declaration, nor would we have supposed that because it was said he loved the family, he necessarily loved every individual member of the family, or that every member of it would necessarily receive his bounty, independently of the restricting condition annexed to the declaration. And why is it not as easy to understand the declaration of God's love to the world? Merely because, if so understood, it will undermine the fundamental doctrine of your system, viz. that God loves, and in consequence of this love, pardons every individual of our race. In common language, too, we use general terms of the same kind, when they cannot be understood according to their full and literal import. We say of a patriot that he loved his country to such a degree that he sacrificed his life for the advancement of its interests, yet we do not mean by this that he loved every individual inhabitant of the country. When a person is about to publish a book, we say that he is about to *give it to the world*, although we know that by far the greater part of mankind will never either see it or hear of it. The conclusion, therefore, which naturally follows from these remarks, is that the

general terms "world," "all men," &c. frequently occur in Scripture, when they cannot be understood in their full, literal import, and in such cases the limitation appears, either from the obvious meaning of the passage itself, from the bearing of the context, or from the analogy of other passages of similar import.

In connection with the mistake which I have been considering, I may mention another into which you have fallen with regard to the meaning of the word "reconcile." You say, "The Bible never speaks of God's *being reconciled*, but only *as reconciling*; *to reconcile* is the act of an injured party who forgives: to be reconciled is the condition of one who has committed an offence, and has obtained forgiveness."* The word *reconcile* has the same idea attached to it in the Bible as in ordinary language, namely, that the effect produced by reconciliation is mutual. It is indeed true that the Bible never speaks of God *as being reconciled*, but does it follow that we may not speak of God *as being reconciled*? Is it not said that *he turns from the fierceness of his wrath*—that *he is pacified*—that *he retains not his anger*—and do not these expressions convey the same idea as *being reconciled*? Besides, in the passage you quote from Matthew to support your false sense of *reconcile*, are you not plainly taking advantage of an application of it in the New Testament, when it is evident from the sense of the passage that it has a meaning different from the plain import of the terms? You say that "*to reconcile* is the act of an injured party who forgives; *to be reconciled* is the condition of one who has committed an offence, and has obtained forgiveness." Now, in the passage quoted, we have two parties brought before our mind—the one as injured, and the other as injuring. The one who has injured his brother is not ordered, as we would expect, to *reconcile* his brother to him, but to *be reconciled* to his brother. Is it not, how-

* Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, page 172.

ever, implied, nay, must it not be expressly understood, that the offended brother is pacified, or *reconciled*, for is not his *being reconciled* the very cause that the brother who committed the offence *is reconciled*, or can be said to *be reconciled*? The truth is, that the word *reconcile* in the New Testament, and I may add, in the Old Testament likewise,* when applied passively, has its active signification understood, or in other words, the effect is stated, and not the cause; what the offended party grants, and the offender enjoys, is only implied. Apply these remarks to God's dealings with man. God was offended—man was the offender. Man, like the offending brother at the altar, is reminded that God has something against him. Christ is the days-man between an offended God, and offending man. When the apostle, therefore, prays us in Christ's stead, to *be reconciled* to God, the phrase must be understood in the same way as in the case of the offending brother. It implies as in that case that the injured party, namely, God, *is reconciled*. To *be reconciled* is the condition of man, and this *effect* arises from the *cause* and operation towards him, namely, God's *being reconciled*. In 2 Corinthians v. 19, where it is said "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing unto them their trespasses," the same peculiarity of idea is attached to *reconcile* in its active, as elsewhere in its passive form. Understood in its literal import it states what is contrary to fact, as in the passage from Matthew, that the injured party is doing what should be done, and what can be done only by the offending party or by his substitute, namely, *reconciling*. Is the world then *reconciling* God? Christ for the world is *reconciling* God. And why is this not said? I answer this question by asking another: why in Matthew is not the offending brother said to *reconcile* the injured brother, as in fact it must be? Had you not a system to support, you would readily grant, that

* See 1 Samuel xxix. 4.

the word, though peculiarly applied, has the same ideas attached to it as in common language. Much may be made of this passage, if I have succeeded in wresting it from your misapplication. An injured party, being reconciled, may love and pardon. You must allow that many roll sin as a sweet morsel under their tongue, and if it be indeed true that "God is angry with the wicked every day,"* he is reconciled to those only whom he can behold with complacency. He cannot, therefore, behold all men with complacency, and consequently, the term *world* in this passage, even from the meaning of *reconcile*, independently of other considerations before adduced, must be understood in a limited sense. To the unjustified, God does impute and will impute their trespasses.

When we talk, however, of God's being reconciled in consequence of Christ's atonement, we must guard against supposing that any change was produced in the mind of the immutable Jehovah. "He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." The rendering of the Divine Being propitious, refers not to the *production* of love in the state of his mind towards sinful man, but simply to *the mode of its expression*. The state of his mind was from eternity the same. "He loved his people with an everlasting love."† But Christ, by removing the penalty, opened up a way in which he could express this love, without allowing it to interfere with his other attributes.

In order, however, to render the redemption of man complete, something more was necessary than the removal of the penalty to which he was subjected. Besides being subject to the penalty, man had lost that relish for holiness which he originally possessed; the principles of enmity towards God had been implanted in his heart. This relish for holiness, therefore, must be restored, and this enmity of heart subdued, before he can be a fit subject of the Redeem-

* Psalm vii. 11.

† Jer. xxxi. 3.

er's kingdom. And has not Christ made provision for this likewise? Has he not, by his atonement, procured for believers the gracious influences of the Spirit of God, to re-implant holiness in their hearts? It was one of the great ends of Christ's atonement, that he might not only free from condemnation, but "purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Since the fall, the heart of the natural man is hostile to God; but when the mind has been enlightened by the Spirit,—when it has been enabled by a living faith to lay hold of the atonement, then the work of sanctification commences, and though believers are never completely sanctified in this life, yet he who has begun a good work in them, will continue it, till they receive the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls. As the work of sanctification gradually advances in the soul of the believer, he becomes more and more conformed to the moral image of God, originally implanted in the soul of Adam, the old man waxes weaker and weaker, while the new man daily receives additional strength; and when, at death, the work of sanctification is completed, he is totally purged from sin, and has become "meet for the inheritance of the saints in bliss."

Viewing the plan of redemption in all its parts, we behold in it a striking display of the free grace of God. It was purely a matter of free grace in God ever to think of man in his lost estate. It was a matter of free grace in Christ voluntarily to undertake the great work of redemption. And it is as much a matter of free grace in the Holy Spirit to bestow upon believers the blessings procured by the atonement. Redemption is commenced, continued, and consummated by grace. It is a glorious display of the whole Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, freely and graciously co-operating for man's benefit.* Notwithstanding the atone-

* We are naturally inclined to look upon God the Father, not as a tender parent, cherishing kindness towards us, but as a stern law-

ment, however, believers do not receive the happiness of heaven as a matter of right. Suppose a lawgiver enacts a law, annexing to it a penalty for disobedience, and promising a reward for obedience. If one of his subjects violates this law, he not only incurs the penalty, but forfeits the reward of obedience. The law being dishonoured, requires the infliction of the penalty. If in this case the lawgiver finds that the ends of justice may be secured, and at the same time the offender pardoned, by allowing the punishment to be inflicted upon an innocent person, who voluntarily substitutes himself in the room of the guilty, he may

giver, unbending in his demands, severe in judgment, and hasty in executing vengeance. Our love is more readily exercised towards the Son and Holy Spirit than towards the Father. The love of Christ is manifested to us in the impressive action of dying for our sakes, and that of the Spirit, in the application of the benefits of Christ's purchase; but there is a proneness in the mind to look on God the Father, not as the bestower of a gift to deliver us from the consequences of sin, but as a stern and inflexible Judge, displaying his vindictive justice in punishing the rebellious. To this feeling the whole tenor of Scripture is opposed. Whatever has a tendency to excite such feelings in our mind respecting the Godhead is highly improper, and ought not for a moment to be indulged. In the Scriptures the work of our redemption is represented as a harmonious whole, and Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are alike concerned in it, and alike claim our regard. The mistaken idea which I have mentioned proceeds from a secret wish to bring down the proceedings of an infinite Being to the level of our finite capacities. By separating in idea what in reality admits of no separation, we break that bond of union which connects the Godhead in harmonious movement,—planning, executing, and finishing the work of our redemption. Whenever we attempt, with finite minds, to grasp the proceedings of the Godhead, and to express our thoughts on what our minds cannot properly comprehend, nor language convey, we feel our weakness, and are constrained to acknowledge, that we know more of God by faith than by the understanding.

accept of the satisfaction which this person, by substitution, renders to the law. When the punishment is inflicted on the substitute, the broken law is honoured, and the offender pardoned. He is still, however, a guilty person, and as such, cannot claim the reward of obedience. Punishment may be transferred, but guilt cannot. The offender, even after the law has been honoured, remains guilty of the crime which he had committed, although not chargeable with it as a ground of condemnation. If, therefore, he receives the reward of obedience, it is a matter of free and undeserved favour on the part of the lawgiver, and not of obligation.—In like manner, although a believer is justified, and even sanctified, in consequence of the atonement, the law still regards him as guilty, and *deserving* punishment. Although Christ, his substitute, has freed him from the penalty denounced against transgression, and has procured for him the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit to fit him for the enjoyment of eternal happiness, still he has no claim to that happiness as the reward of obedience, resulting from his own innocent nature, and when he receives it, it is not as a matter of obligation on the part of God, but of free and unmerited favour. A law, once broken, never ceases to condemn, and every believer is conscious that he is guilty of many violations of the holy law of God, and that it is only by the grace of God that he escapes condemnation, and receives the meetness for heaven through the agency of the Spirit procured by Christ's atonement. In the Revelation, Satan is said to accuse the brethren, or believers, day and night before God. And of what has he to accuse them? Of a law violated, which they ought to have obeyed. But his accusations are answered by Christ's perfect righteousness, in having fulfilled all that the law required, and having borne the penalty which they by transgression had merited, and thus having enabled God not only to pardon them, but to receive them into the enjoyments of the celestial paradise, without suffering his justice to be impaired, or his authority, as the moral governor of the universe, weakened.

That God the Father was well pleased with the atonement of the Son, he testified at the time of his baptism by John, when there came a voice from the throne of God, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ;"—by a repetition of the same Divine testimony on the mount of transfiguration—by raising him from the dead when the work of Atonement was finished—by receiving him after his resurrection into the glory which he had at the Father's right hand before the world was—and by the descent of the Holy Spirit, the promised comforter, upon the apostles at the day of Pentecost. And well might the Father be pleased by an atonement of such great, such transcendent value—a value derived from the voluntary nature of Christ's mediatorial work—from the union in him of the Divine with the human nature—from the unsullied purity and holiness of his human nature—from the greatness of the sufferings which he endured—and from the glorious ends which these sufferings were designed to accomplish, namely, the glory of God, and the eternal happiness of myriads of intelligent beings, capable of loving, adoring, and serving their Creator.

What then is the Gospel? As is the fall, so is the atonement; and as is the atonement, so is the gospel. It is a message from God to man, and such a message as an all-perfect God would give, and fallen man required. It is "an exhibition of the covenant of grace to men, and an absolutely gracious declaration of the good will of God to sinful man, setting before them, and freely offering them, Jesus Christ and all his righteousness, and salvation in him, to be received by them, even the worst, without money and without price. In this view, the gospel differs widely from the law, and is the very reverse of it. The law demands from us perfect holiness of nature and life, and an atonement for whatever offence we have been guilty of: the gospel demands nothing from us, and indeed it is impossible it could require any thing not required in the law, which is exceeding broad; but it represents to us, what God, Father,

Son, and Holy Ghost, have done for us; what blessings they have prepared for us, and are ready to bestow on us, and holds forth the same, in the most encouraging manner, to be received by us. This is the stem of all its doctrinal declarations, absolutely free promises, and kind offers and invitations.”* This gospel was proclaimed to our first parents immediately after their first apostacy, in the gracious declaration, “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head;”† it was published by an angel when in the fulness of time the promised deliverer appeared: “Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men;”‡ and it was fully developed by an inspired apostle, when he said: “The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”||

This message declares what God has done, and also what God now, in virtue of Christ’s atonement, *can do*, and *will do*, to all who accept the offered message. The gospel, however, is not *pardon*, it is merely *the offer of pardon*. By the atonement full satisfaction has been made, in one sense, for the sins of all, but with God remains the removal of the penalty by bestowing pardon, and also the residue of the Spirit, by giving a meetness for heaven. Those whom, in virtue of his good pleasure, he foreknew as the heirs of glory, he calls from darkness to light; and whom he calls,

* Brown’s Dictionary of the Bible—Article Gospel.

† Gen. iii. 15. ‡ Luke ii. 10, 11, 14. || Titus ii. 11—14.

them he also justifies ; and whom he justifies, them he also sanctifies, or predestinates to be conformed to the image of his Son, and, as the consummation of this great work, glorifies.* Many of your mistakes with regard to the nature of the gospel, arise from the ideas you attach to *justification*. You define it to be *a sense of pardon*, whereas, in the work of redemption, it is neither pardon nor a sense of pardon. It is a forensic term, and is applied, as in common language, to denote a change made in our state in respect to the law, before God as Judge. Pardon is the effect of being justified, and a *sense of pardon* is not *justification*, but rather *sanctification*, or the state of the renewed man in heart and life before God as a father. This confusion of terms is necessary for the support of your system, but it is, in every respect, opposed to the word of God. I should like to hear your exposition of the passage in Romans to which I have adverted. There every part is in beautiful harmony, cause and effect succeeding from the commencement of redemption till its completion. There is in this splendid climax, even no mention made of pardon, because it is unnecessary. A cause cannot operate without producing an effect, and pardon being the effect of justification, is understood. To say that a man is justified and not pardoned, is a contradiction. You say, that “ as sinners are justified by faith, it must be also true that they are *pardoned by faith*.”† That “ we are justified by faith,” is a declaration of the Bible, but that we are *pardoned by faith* is a declaration of your own. The matter is just as the Bible represents it—we are justified by faith, and if so, we are pardoned in consequence of being justified. We are not justified *on account of faith*. These words you attach to our system, whereas it is absolutely false that we acknowledge any such doctrine. We are justified *by faith* as the appointed means, and not *on account*

* See Romans viii. 29, 30.

† Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, page 125.

of faith as a ground of pardon.* Is it fair dealing thus to charge us with holding doctrines which are as much abhorred by us as by yourself? Is it fair dealing to make up a confused jumble of opinions, alike contrary to our belief and to the word of God, and then say that this is "*the religion of the land*?" It is the chicanery of a court of law, the trick of a pleader for a party, but as a dealing it is unfair, and as an action, unjust.

* Pardon and justification, referred to their ultimate results, may be used synonymously. In human affairs there is a difference, and in religion, according to the circumstances under which man is placed as to his spiritual state, the one term is preferable. In human affairs, an innocent person, when acquitted of a crime of which he has been falsely accused, is not pardoned—he is justified, or declared innocent. A criminal cannot be justified, or declared innocent, and if delivered from punishment, he is pardoned. In Scripture language, pardon is a deliverance from punishment;—justification entitles to eternal life. Pardon has a specific reference to sinners;—justification to persons pronounced righteous. By pardon the sinner escapes the punishment of hell;—by justification, he has by the gift of God through Christ's imputed righteousness, a claim to heaven. A sinner, considering his danger on account of sin, prays for pardon;—thinking on the innocence which he has lost, he prays for justification, and the meetness for the enjoyment of heaven in sanctification. Pardon, therefore, conveys an idea distinct from justification, on account of the varying circumstances with which it may be connected, and may be called the effect of justification; or if they are not connected as cause and effect, they are at least so connected that without justification, pardon cannot be granted. By faith in the atonement a sinner is justified, and accepted in the Beloved, and God sees no iniquity in him. God does not pardon man because he is a sinner, but because he is justified by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and thus God is just while the justifier of sinners, and true to his word that sin should not go unpunished, at the same time that in the exercise of mercy he passes by the sins of those who believe. In consistency with his divine character, God can look with complacency on those who are justified, and those in

One inconsistency prepares you for another. In prayer, you do not petition for pardon, but for a sense of pardon. One would think that the obvious absurdity of such a practice would be enough to expose it to merited obloquy. As you appear, however, to be serious in maintaining it, and as it forms an important part of your system, it may not be improper to consider it for a little. It is a practice directly opposed to common sense. If I am hungry, will I ask for food, or for a sense of food? Does a drowning man cry for assistance, or for a sense of assistance? I know you will say, it is impossible for a person to have the sense of possessing a thing, without having the thing itself. In contradiction to this, however, I affirm that a man may, and often does, enjoy the sense of possessing a thing, when in reality he does not possess the thing itself. Had not the maniac mentioned by M'Kenzie in his "Man of Feeling," who, amidst the horrors of a dungeon and the rattling of fetters, fancied himself a mighty potentate, had not he a sense of grandeur, although of grandeur itself he was totally destitute; and did he not enjoy as much satisfaction from this sense of grandeur, as if he had actually enjoyed the thing itself? I grant, indeed, that it was a false sense he enjoyed—it was a mere delusion; but is there not reason to fear that your system has a natural tendency to make a sinner believe that he is pardoned, when in reality he is "yet in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity?" Like the maniac,

whom he delights, receive pardon. Justification states the means, viz. imputed righteousness, through which pardon is bestowed. Pardon of sin, and the title to eternal life, though separable as acts of the divine administration, may be considered as to time co-equal, but the cause, imputed righteousness, produces justification, and consequently pardon, so that they may be considered as two parts of a whole—the one, viz. justification, being in immediate connection with the cause, imputed righteousness. In treating, therefore, of pardon and justification, the one may not improperly be called the effect of the other.

he may be hugging the chains of sin with which he is bound, and, in the ravings of a deluded mind, fancying himself the favourite of Heaven, and from this delusive belief he may enjoy as much peace of mind, as much satisfaction and joy, as if it was founded on a reality. But let the maniac be restored to the use of his reason, and all the satisfaction and joy arising from his sense of grandeur, will vanish : and let the self-deluded sinner awaken from his delusion ; let a death-bed bring before his mind in vivid colours, the awful realities of eternity, and then, if his heart still remains unsanctified by the operation of the Spirit of grace ; if conscience within, with a still small voice which pierces to his inmost soul, tells him that he is not yet fit to die, his fondly cherished delusion, instead of affording him comfort, will prove his worst tormentor, it will then appear in its true colours, and only serve to add another and a severer pang to his last agonies. But the maniac may die in his insanity, fancying himself a monarch, and the impenitent sinner may die in his delusion, fancying himself pardoned ; but dreadful will be his disappointment. We forbear, however, to follow his trembling spirit to the bar of God, and leave you to decide whether or not your system has a tendency to produce such a delusion.

When the Earl of Essex was condemned to death for high treason, he entertained strong hopes of being pardoned by Queen Elizabeth, who had formerly given him a ring, which she desired him to send to her in any emergency of this nature, assuring him that it would procure her immediate protection. This ring he sent to the Queen by the hands of the Countess of Nottingham, who, being a concealed enemy of the unfortunate Earl, never delivered it. When the Queen, after the execution of Essex, was informed of the conduct of the Countess, she was so much displeased, that she declared she never would forgive her. Now, had any person after this told the Countess that Elizabeth had pardoned her, although in reality it was not the case, the Countess, if she believed it, would enjoy the same peace of

mind, satisfaction, and joy, as if Elizabeth had been really reconciled to her, and had actually pardoned her. It is evident, however, that she only believed a lie, and that the peace of mind arising from this belief, was entirely a delusion, which would immediately have dissipated, if afterwards she had learned that the pardon had never been really granted. This illustration proves the truth of my proposition, that the sense of pardon may be enjoyed, and may produce peace of mind, although the pardon itself is not granted.

Besides being opposed to common sense, the practice of praying for a sense of pardon, and not for pardon itself, is at direct and irreconcilable variance with the many examples of prayer for pardon which are recorded in the word of God. I am aware that you attempt to get over this difficulty by saying that those who uttered such petitions *meant* a sense of pardon; but I would remind you that we can judge of what they meant only by what they actually said, and if you persist in affirming that when they said one thing they meant another, it remains with you to state what grounds you have for the assertion. Both the Old and New Testament abound with petitions for pardon of sin, but I shall select only a few of the most striking. After the Israelites had made and worshipped the golden calf, Moses, addressing God, says, "This people have sinned a great sin; yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin:—and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the book which thou hast written."* It appears from this prayer that Moses was totally unacquainted with your theory, for he evidently expresses a doubt whether or not God would pardon the Israelites, whereas if he had known, as you do, that God had already pardoned their sin, there would have been no occasion for his doubting the matter, or even for praying that God would pardon them. Another instance of the same doubt whether

* Exodus xxxii. 31, 32.

God would pardon, occurs in the following passage. Peter, addressing Simon Magus, says, "Repent, and pray God, *if perhaps* the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."* The following are direct addresses to God. "O Lord, pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance."† "Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people, according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people from Egypt, even until now."‡ "The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God."|| "For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." "Look upon mine affliction and my pain, and forgive all my sins."§ "Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy loving-kindness; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions." "Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities."** "O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do."†† "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."‡‡ "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us."|||| To say that these are not prayers for pardon, but for a sense of pardon, is to say that there is no meaning in language, no consistency in the word of God. When I pray in that form which Christ delivered to his Apostles as a model for their prayers, and say, "Give me day by day my daily bread," you will readily allow that I mean to pray for the very thing which I express, and not for a sense of it; but when I immediately add, "And forgive me my trespasses," with what consistency can you say, that I then ask not for forgiveness, but for a sense of it. If you say so of the one petition, you must say the same of the other; they are exactly similar. In the one I ask for bread, and in the other for forgiveness, and if by forgiveness I

* Acts viii. 22. † Exodus xxxiv. 9. ‡ Numbers xiv. 19.

|| 2 Chr. xxx. 18, 19. § Psal. xxv. 11, 18. ** Psal. li. 1. 9.

†† Daniel ix. 19. ‡‡ Luke xxiii. 34. ||| Luke xi. 4.

mean a sense of forgiveness, then by bread I must certainly mean a sense of bread. It is evident that our Lord, when he taught his apostles this form of prayer, did not mean by forgiveness, a sense of it; for he adds, "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."* Now, if forgiveness in the prayer means a sense of forgiveness, the meaning of these verses will be: If ye give to men a sense that ye have forgiven them, your heavenly Father will also give to you a sense that he has forgiven you; but if ye give not to men a sense that ye have forgiven them their trespasses, neither will your Father give to you a sense that he has forgiven you. This requires no comment—the absurdity of it is so gross that it must strike every person who enjoys the sound use of his reason. Many other passages might be paraphrased in the same way, but it is unnecessary; if you take such liberties with the word of God as to affirm that one thing stated in it means another thing entirely different, you may wrest it to the support of any error you may think proper to promulgate; you may make it speak a language in accordance with the wildest fancies of your own imagination. Remember, however, that the greatest curse denounced in the Bible is against those who add to, or diminish from, the words that are written in that book; and if the crime of adding to, or diminishing from, the word of God, is so great, it is surely a crime of equal magnitude, wilfully to pervert its plain and obvious meaning.

You say that the freeness of the gospel consists in pardon. To this I answer, that the offer is gratuitous. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."† "Who-soever believeth in him shall receive the remission of sins."‡ To this you object by saying that "this statement really denies that a man is pardoned until he believes. And thus

* Matthew vi. 14, 15. † Isa. lv. 1. ‡ Acts x. 43.

it throws his whole confidence on his having believed.”* You misrepresent the matter grossly. You impute to us what forms no part either of our creed or of our practice. Our confidence is not fixed on our *having believed*, but on the atonement of Christ. Again you say, “So long as it is received as truth, that God’s forgiveness is bestowed only on those who possess some particular quality, such as faith, or repentance, or sincerity,—so long are men necessarily compelled to regard their possession of these qualities as the ground of their confidence before God.”† In this statement you lay to our charge what we deny, and therefore your inference is false. “It is easy,” you add, “to vary phrases; and it is easy for ingenious minds to deceive themselves, by the use of phrases; but it is absolutely impossible, in point of fact, for any one to believe that God’s condemnation rests upon all men until they have faith in the gospel, and that that condemnation is removed as soon as they have faith in the gospel, without at the same time regarding faith as the ground of his confidence before God. And thus he is naturally led to look *inward* for the ground of his confidence.”‡ Easy as you think this to be, it is, in my opinion, as easy and far more criminal for *disingenuous* minds intentionally to deceive others. Look *inward*, you say, for the ground of our confidence! No, Sir, *you* look *inward*, but *we* look *outward*. We have no confidence in *faith, repentance, or any other particular quality*, but we have dependence on Christ. Our clergymen of every denomination, with a few exceptions, as well as the laity, will point the finger of contempt at these statements, and inscribe upon them “*falsehood*.” You allow indeed that “many suppose that they escape from this error, by representing the gospel as an *offer* of pardon to all men.”|| The “*error*” is denied; and does not the gratuitousness of the gospel consist in the *offer* of

* Introd. Essay to Extracts of Letters, page xvi. † Do. page xv.

‡ Do. page xv. || Do. page xvi.

pardon? "The *offer*," you say, "does not refer to the pardon, but to the *enjoyment of the pardon*;"* and this you call "an important distinction." If so, we expect for it decisive proof. The Bible, it seems, furnishes none; but a simile is at hand. A simile, however, is neither an argument, nor proof of an argument, and it can only serve to illustrate. Even for this, the one you have chosen is very defective. "A friend leaves me a legacy of a thousand pounds; if I believe the information, I have the enjoyment of it; if I do not believe it, I have not the enjoyment of it; but the fact remains unaffected by my belief or unbelief."† A simile intended to illustrate, should always have a resemblance to the thing illustrated. This simile has only a distant resemblance. You were talking of free pardon; let us leave legacies, therefore, and give what is better,—a discharge to a condemned criminal. If a criminal is pardoned, will he not enjoy the benefit of the pardon, independently of his belief? When a criminal is pardoned, what is he offered? The sense of pardon? No, that would be mockery. The enjoyment of pardon? No, the gift must be received before it can be enjoyed. He must first be in possession of the cause of joy, before he can find enjoyment. This cause is pardon, and your "*important distinction*" is not only frivolous, but absurd. The offer which the criminal wants is pardon, and the enjoyment will follow as a matter of course. Enter the cell of a condemned criminal, and tell him you are authorised to offer him the *enjoyment of pardon*, and he will demand from you first the pardon itself, and when he is satisfied that it is genuine, he will receive the enjoyment as a necessary effect from the pardon which has been granted him. This pardon he likewise enjoys, in one sense, independently of his own belief. The Magistrates of a town, in liberating a pardoned criminal, are never influenced by the belief of the prisoner, but by the command of

* Introd. Essay, &c. page xvi. † Do. page xvi.

the Sovereign. Receiving from him a reprieve, they give it independently of the prisoner's belief. Their offer rests not on the state of the prisoner's belief, but on the authority of the Sovereign. So with the offer of the gospel. All mankind are under the sentence of condemnation, and they require not, in the first instance, a *sense* of deliverance, but deliverance itself—not the enjoyment of pardon, but pardon itself. The gift being received, the enjoyment will follow. The Bible speaks to men as sinners, and offers them deliverance from the condemnation of sin, and this is the very thing they require. Enter the chamber of an awakened sinner, and tell him you are authorised to offer him the enjoyment of pardon, will he not ask first for the pardon itself, and trust for the enjoyment as a necessary consequence. The pardon likewise, in his case, is, in one sense, independent of faith. It is independent of *self-faith*, but necessarily connected with the *faith inwrought by the Spirit*. All whom God, by an act of predestination, has pardoned, receive their pardon solely on the authority of the Lawgiver. The offer of pardon is as free from the King of kings as from an earthly sovereign, and the difference lies not in the *offer* but in the *mode* of it. An earthly king names those to whom he offers pardon, whereas, the King of kings offers pardon to all; but the subjects of his government must be made willing in the day of his power, even to accept of the offer of pardon. As many as receive it, to them gives he power to become the sons of God; but why all have not the power to receive it, is resolvable only into the sovereignty of God. One is taken and another left; and in so doing the Judge of all the earth will do right. In this view the result of both theories is the same. "Many are called," (not pardoned) "but few chosen." "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Between a finite creature and his Creator, their must of necessity be a dark unknown, into which the most powerful human mind never can penetrate. Incomprehensibility is inseparable from God and all his works, even as low as the growth of a blade of grass; but although to man,

limited in his powers of mind, much mystery remains around the character and works of God; still these may be comprehended as far as they are revealed, and some minds may understand them better than others. In the nature of things there is a certain limit beyond which the human mind cannot proceed on divine subjects, but every mind is not so constituted as to reach even this boundary. None of the other apostles discourses so much on the "deep things of God" as Paul does, especially in his Epistle to the Romans. Possessing uncommon strength of intellect, he was led by the Spirit to discuss topics which required a grasp of mind superior to that of any of his fellow apostles. It gives pain to the mind to hear men with understandings erring and comparatively weak, questioning the solidity of Paul's reasoning powers, and denying the justness of his conclusions, because, from the feebleness of their intellects, they cannot descend with him into the depth of his principles, or ascend into all the ramifications of their application. Acknowledging the inspiration of Paul, it is granted that he could not err, and if he has gone so deep in profound subjects that *we* cannot follow him, *others may*, who are gifted with minds equally expansive, and are assisted in their comprehension by that Spirit which directed him in their utterance. We cannot sufficiently admire the decision of Peter on Paul's writings. He had a mind not so vigorous as that of Paul, and the perusal of Paul's masterly reasoning only forced from him the confession, that he had uttered some things hard to be understood—a confession which proves his candour as a man, and his humility as a Christian. This is an inference very different from that adopted by many, that what in Paul's writings they cannot comprehend, they will reject, or wrest into compliance with their favourite system.

FAITH.

It is easier to ask questions than to answer them—to state difficulties than to give their solution. This is peculiarly applicable to difficulties connected with religion. In God's dealings towards man, the facts of his proceedings may be comprehended, while the nature of these facts may be incomprehensible. This is strikingly displayed in the many discussions, which; from the time of the apostles to the present day, have taken place on the subject of faith. Every view of it presents difficulties greater or less, and these difficulties, whether real or supposed, make enquirers into divine things reject as false, what they cannot reconcile or comprehend, and in their anxiety with finite minds to trace and explain the proceedings of an infinite Being, they not unfrequently adopt views of divine truth opposed to the word of God.

Faith, by logicians, is defined to be “a simple assent of the mind to the truth of any known proposition.” This; however, does not constitute the faith of the gospel. It is in one sense, indeed, an act of the understanding, but it has a necessary connection with the heart, for “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” The faith of the gospel implies not only that the understanding assents to the truth of the message of God to man; but that the will be in consequence induced to act agreeably to the dictates of the understanding. To reduce the faith of the gospel to a mere assent, such as is exercised in the ordinary transactions of

life, is to deprive it of one of its most striking features. If I am told, for instance, by a friend of known veracity, that such a person is dead, I assent without hesitation to the truth of the statement. This belief, however, produces no change in my conduct. I think, speak, and act in the same manner as before I heard of the circumstance. Circumstances connected with the death of the individual may affect my feelings, but still as the fact has no immediate reference to my interest, it is merely assented to, without producing any change upon my actions. An assent of this kind is faith in its common acceptation. In such a faith the understanding alone is called into action; the will remains totally uninfluenced. The word faith, therefore, in its common acceptation, does not fully convey the nature of faith in the same manner in which it is applied by the inspired writers. The faith of the gospel requires not merely the assent of the understanding, but also the consent of the will. Do we not every day meet with men who fully assent to the truths of the gospel, and yet are not under their hallowed influence? The philosopher, speculating in his closet, may be compelled, on merely rational grounds, and from deliberately weighing the arguments for the truth of Christianity, to acknowledge the truth of the declarations contained in the inspired volume, and firmly to believe that "there is no other name given under heaven among men by which they can be saved than the name of Jesus." There is such a harmony between the fallen state of man and the fitness of the gospel scheme to recover him from his ruined condition, that a careful perusal of the Bible may produce a conviction of its truth, while the heart remains as totally uninfluenced by its requirements as if the knowledge of its contents had never been embraced by the understanding. Nay, it is even possible, and experience furnishes us with many examples of men of the most splendid talents checking the progress of error by arguments of the most convincing kind, and gaining many triumphs over infidelity, when they are themselves spiritually dead to the power of Godliness.

Authors are to be found, whose writings do honour to their understandings, but whose hearts were wholly uninfluenced by the truths they so ably defended. A living faith, therefore, must actuate the whole mind of man. The understanding must embrace the truth, and the influence of this truth must incline the heart to new obedience. Suppose I am informed of the death of a near relation, in whom I am deeply interested, and from whose legalised bequest I expect a legacy. The information in this case not only gains the assent of my understanding, but also rouses my will to action; it is not treasured up in my understanding as a fact to which I merely assent, but it has a practical effect on my conduct. I endeavour to secure the benefit of the bequest, by using for that purpose every means which circumstances may require, or the law of the land demand. My faith in this case is influential, from the nature of the truth received, and so far it resembles the faith of the gospel. The truth believed is enough to produce action, and in this it differs from the faith of the gospel, for a conviction of the truth of the word of God is not sufficient to incite the will to action, without the operation of the Spirit, to render it efficacious. For this reason no illustration from natural things will be quite analogous to the faith of the gospel; the things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned, and must be spiritually illustrated. In the case of a person receiving a legacy by the death of his relation, he finds his name expressly mentioned, and there is a court to prove the authenticity of the testator's will. In his case there can be no mistake. The legacy is to him, and no other. It is not a legacy to be received at a distant period, and his receiving of it depending on extraneous circumstances producing certain evidence to satisfy himself and others, that there is in store for him a rich inheritance. The record is in his possession; his name and no other is specified; the transaction is entirely confined to the world. The testator is of the earth; the gift is earthly, and every thing connected with it is of the earth. Not so, however, in spiritual matters. The

transaction is between heaven and earth—God and man.—“God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life.” He has not failed in fulfilling the greater promise, and he will not fail in fulfilling the less.—He promised his Son,—this promise has been fulfilled; and with him there is eternal life for those who believe. An individual, in reading a testament in which there is a legacy bequeathed to him, can say, “this is mine, because I am named in it, and nothing is required of me but its reception.” The same individual reads the testament of the Saviour, and finds in it a bequest to man, but whether he be *the man*, is a thing of which he must assure himself by evidence. The record in which he is named is on high, but his faith, operating in the fruits of righteousness, assimilates his character gradually to heaven. To him the law, in all its requirements, appears holy, just, and good, and its image being transferred into his mind in the process of sanctification, it becomes to him a rule of life, and like the Psalmist, in keeping this law, he finds great peace. His path, indeed, is only like the morning sun, advancing to perfect day. In moving along, clouds frequently obscure his brightness to beholders. He is assailed by temptation; he has within him a heart not thoroughly sanctified, and he must often adopt the language of the apostle,—“To will is present, but how to perform that which is good, I find not.” Thinking on the corruptions which still lurk in his heart, he exclaims,—“O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Then turning his view to Christ, he adds,—“I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Although true faith is *inwrought* in the soul of every believer by the Spirit of God, it does not follow, that it is produced in the same degree, or in exactly the same manner, in all. The minds of men are differently constituted, and the Spirit graciously accomodates the mode of his operation to the particular disposition of the person on whom he exerts his influence. One man, for instance, is naturally

of an amiable temper, tender in feeling, and easily won by kindness; and the Spirit directs his view to the unspeakable love of God as displayed in the gift of his Son,—leads him to Calvary, and by exhibiting to him a suffering Redeemer bleeding for his sake,—draws him “with the cords of love, as with the bands of a man.” Another has feelings of an opposite kind; his mind is naturally stern and self-dependent, he is not so easily allured by kindness, but must be terrified into an acceptance of the gospel message. Towards him the Spirit acts in a different manner. He drags him to Mount Sinai, and amidst its thunders proclaims to him the inflexible law of God, then, tearing from his soul the veil with which he had concealed it from himself, shows him his sins in all their awful enormity, and subduing his hardened heart by the terrors of Divine vengeance, forces him to exclaim in the wildness of despair, “What shall I do to be saved?” He is then in a fit state to receive the peaceful message of the gospel, and in the declaration of redeeming love, finds a balm to soothe his troubled breast.

As the mode of the Spirit’s operation varies according to the different dispositions of men, so the faith of believers varies from the same cause. The faith of one man may consist in an earnest desire of union to Christ; that of another, in a dependence upon Christ—a trusting or staying on God; and that of a third, in waiting on God—an importunate seeking of some manifestation of his favour, and saying, like Jacob, “I will not let thee go until thou bless me.” These different modes of faith, however, are all substantially the same. They are produced by the same Spirit; they have the same objects in view, and rest upon the same sure foundation.

The station of faith in redemption is secondary, not primary. We are saved by the atoning sacrifice of Christ as the procuring cause of salvation, and by faith, as the means appointed by God; we receive Christ as offered in the word, and rest on him to justify us in the sight of God, and to sanctify our nature by the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

The origin of faith, therefore, is from the grace of God—the subject is the record which he has given of his Son—the quality of mind which it requires is a combined feeling of dependence and confidence. The first act of the mind which it brings into operation, is the assent of the understanding, the second, the consent of the will, and proofs, through the sanctifying influences of the Spirit, are furnished from its effects on the walk and conversation.

Some have supposed that they discovered a want of agreement between the statements of the apostles Paul and James respecting faith. This supposition, however, is unfounded. To a cursory reader, there is, indeed, an apparent discrepancy between the writings of these two inspired apostles, but a little attention to their different manner of writing will show that it is only apparent. The writings of James are remarkably sententious, bold, and abrupt. His style is formed after the Eastern manner, the connection existing more in thought than in language. Our style is more after the Grecian manner, preserving the connection in language as well as in thought, and on this account the writings of James requires close attention, before we can follow out his train of reasoning. In speaking of the manner in which we are justified before God, following his usual abrupt style, he merely acknowledges faith as the principle from which good works spring, and without tracing the necessary connection between the principle and its effects, he, in terms, ascribes our justification to good works. By so doing, however, he does not deny the necessary cause of these good works to be a living faith in Christ. He states decidedly the necessity of faith, and without tracing this principle to its effects, as a writer formed after the Grecian manner would have done, following the abrupt style of the Eastern nations, he imputes to the effect what can properly be imputed only to principle and effect combined. His writings are connected in thought, though not in language, and when he says that “a man is justified by works, and not by faith only,” he states connectedly in thought, but unconnectedly

in language, the same truth as Paul does, when connecting principle and effect, he says, "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."—"Faith works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world." Were these considerations duly weighed, the supposed discrepancy between Paul and James might easily be settled. The one dwells on faith as a principle, the other on the effects of faith, and without opposing each other, the one imputes to the principle what the other imputes to its effects, and in their application of this doctrine, their language, though apparently different, leads to the same conclusion, and in sentiment, they exactly harmonize.

Many of your mistakes respecting the faith of the gospel, arise from a want of distinction between it and a merely logical faith. You say that "the use of faith is to give the pardon a moral influence, by which it may heal the spiritual diseases of the soul.* So then justifying faith has no influence, and produces no effects upon the state of man's heart. If this statement is true, where is the truth of those numerous passages in the Bible, which expressly refer our justification and our sanctification to the influence of *faith*, resting on the atonement, as the appointed medium through which these blessings are communicated, and not to *the pardon*? And where is there a single text in the inspired volume which intimates that the pardon produces the "*moral influence*," which a living faith does on the heart and character? Faith, according to your system, is simply the belief of an individual that *his* sins are pardoned, and after this act of believing, "*the pardon*" produces in his heart and life the fruits of righteousness, and his *faith* stands as an insulated act producing no effect upon his character. Important discovery! How unlike this statement are the Scripture declarations, which uniformly represent the graces of the Christian character, as proceeding from the faith of

* Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, page 24.

the gospel. By attributing to pardon, when embraced by faith, a moral influence, you ascribe to it that influence which the Spirit gives to faith ; you directly contradict the plain and repeated declarations of God's word ; and confound the whole Christian scheme, by tracing effects to wrong causes. This confusion of terms, however, is necessary for the support of your system ; but what must that system be which cannot be supported without altering the established usage of language ; inverting the order established by God in man's redemption ; and rendering the whole Bible a mass of unintelligible and contradictory statements ? But, " to the law and to the testimony ;" *In the Bible, justification is ascribed to faith as the means.* " Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith."* " Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."† " A man is justified by the faith of Jesus Christ."‡ The law was our schoolmaster unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."|| *Adoption is ascribed to faith.* " Ye are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ."§ *The joy and comfort of believers spring from faith.* " In whom (Christ) believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."** " He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."†† *Sanctification is by faith.* " Purifying their hearts by faith."‡‡ " That they may receive the inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in me."||| After reading these passages I am at a loss to conceive how you can affirm that the influence which is here ascribed to faith belongs to pardon, unless you suppose that *faith* and *pardon* are convertible terms, or that the word "*faith*" in these, and other passages of a similar import, ought to have been written "*pardon*." Your design in attributing to *pardon* the effects

* Rom. iii. 28.

† Rom. v. 1.

‡ Gal. ii. 16.

|| iii. 24.

§ iii. 26.

** 1 Peter i. 8.

†† 1 John v. 10.

‡‡ Acts xv. 9.

||| Acts xxvi. 18.

of *faith* is evident. As you suppose faith to be nothing more than a simple assent to the truth of the gospel statements, you of course feel the difficulty of ascribing to this simple assent the effects ascribed in Scripture to a true and living faith, and therefore you attribute them to the supposed influence which the assent of the mind gives to the pardon. But is not this evidently a last resource to support a theory otherwise insupportable? Is it not a subverting of the plain meaning of language—a wresting of the words of inspiration to prove that *you* are right, and consequently that all who do not embrace your opinions are wrong? I grant that *pardon* may produce in the mind some measure of joy, and love, and gratitude, but how can it produce such fruits of the spirit as contrition of soul, spirituality of mind, patient forbearance, self-denial, genuine charity, and others that might be mentioned?

You suppose that the commonly received opinions respecting faith make the pardon depend on conditions, whereas on your system there are no conditions attached to pardon. In this I have often thought that you make “a distinction without a difference.” Salvation unconditional! “Without faith it is impossible to please God.”* Faith, however, is not the procuring cause of our salvation, but it is so connected with salvation, that though “*on account of*” it we are not saved, without it we cannot be saved. Man is not the efficient cause of faith; it is *inwrought* by the Spirit; and neither on your system nor on ours can a sinner be saved without faith connected with Christ’s atonement. If faith requires to be in operation in your system as well as in ours, then faith is a condition, an appendage, or call it what you will; but whatever liberty you take with the word, allow me the same, and your “*unconditional*” system becomes *conditional*. “What is the use,” you say, “of making two steps instead of one?” Accommodating

* Heb. xi. 6.

your own language—from a *sense* of sound health you accomplish in *one step* what I and other debilitated pilgrims, shut out from your spiritual camp on account of a loathsome leprosy, accomplish in *two*. By steps, then, we both arrive at the end of our journey, and your *one step* is as necessary a *condition* in order to reach Zion's gates, as are my *two*. We are, in fact, if your representation be correct, fellow-travellers of unequal pace, obtaining the same end, the one by a *long step*, which the other *divides into two*. Besides, if *all* are objects of pardon, or rather, if *all* are pardoned, none can be punished; if *some* are punished and yet *all* pardoned, the word *pardon* has some ideas of limitation attached to it which I do not understand, and which the common use of the term does not authorise. If the pardon requires the operation of faith before it becomes effective for delivering from the bondage and punishment of guilt, then faith is a condition annexed to pardon. The Bible states the matter clearly. "By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."* If "many are called, but few chosen," then the few only receive the benefits of the atonement, or rather, in correct language, *are pardoned*. This view limits the extent of Christ's atonement, but not its sufficiency. The limitation is caused by man's perverseness—the Saviour is able and willing to save.

There is to me, Sir, a mystery in the use you make of the word *pardon*. Were a criminal condemned to die, and his Sovereign granted him a pardon, would not the pardon in his case imply deliverance? "O yes," you say, "if he believes it." Why annex this condition? It is not in the pardon which I supposed the criminal received. Does a Sovereign, when he pardons a criminal, ever connect the pardon with the criminal's belief? Since you allow that many will suffer the punishment of sin, how are *all pardoned*,

* Ephesians ii. 8.

and yet many punished? *Because they do not believe the pardon!* But do you not say that pardon is independent of belief? And again I ask, if pardoned, how punished? Were I to say that a king had pardoned a criminal, and yet had ordered the punishment to be inflicted, you would at least accuse me of uttering a contradiction; and if *pardon* and *deliverance* are necessarily connected in language, how is it, I ask you, that according to your system, they are not so in Heaven's jurisprudence? "Men are not condemned," you say, "for breaking the law, but for rejecting the gospel."* Well, allow this to be true, which, however, it is not, what do you gain by it? Is not the rejection of the gospel a sin? I know you will answer in the affirmative, and if so, a pardon which does not include this sin, which, according to your system pardon cannot, is only a partial pardon, and as it admits of the infliction of the same punishment for the uncanceled sin as for all sins, it is not worthy of the name of *pardon*—it is a pardon and not a pardon; a shadow without a substance; a supposed truth and yet a falsehood. Many of your erroneous doctrines may be traced to a misapplication of language. For the sake of illustration, I will take for granted what is not true, that you are orthodox in your opinions of election, as it does not affect the nature of the illustration, or the inference I intend to deduce. Those who are predestinated to eternal life are pardoned, in one sense, before their faith operates. God has chosen his own before the foundation of the world, and therefore, he knows those who are "ordained to eternal life," or to give you a favourite word, are *pardoned*. Take no advantage, however, from this statement, for I said it was only in one sense, and that is, connected with the prescience of God. In correct language, however, it is confounding the decrees of God with their execution. Words must have their sanctioned use, and therefore in the order of things, redemption con-

* Introd. Essay, &c. page xlvii.

veys to our minds *faith* and *pardon*, the one not the cause of the other, but both resting on the merits of Christ's atonement.

Your criticism* on Romans, chap. vi, is such an ingenuous piece of sophistry, that it deserves a little consideration. "I venture to think," you say, "that the meaning of the apostle has been very generally mistaken by translators and commentators. Our version (and all the others agree with it) supposes him to be meeting an objection which might naturally be made to the moral tendency of his doctrine. He had just given a most magnificent view of the riches of divine grace, and he supposes that some one may say, 'But does not this system lead to indulgence in sin? If our own deservings have nothing to do with our pardon, why not go on in our own way, relying on the treasury of merit that is in Christ?' Doubtless, this is a most important point in the Christian scheme, but if we look attentively at the answer which is contained in the six following verses, we shall, I think, come to the conclusion, that the apostle had some other meaning in the first verse, than our version has attributed to him. The moral tendency of the doctrine of grace would have been his theme, if he had intended to answer such an objection as that which is supposed."† On this passage I remark, that a desire to be wise above an inspired Apostle, is one reason of your misapplication of the verse. I shall afterwards show you that the objection supposed in our version is correct, and if so, it is not for you to determine what should have been the Apostle's theme in answering that objection. The Spirit which guided him unto all truth, knew to what theme to direct his thoughts, and he was not directed to the doctrine of "the substitution of Christ in the place of the guilty, and their *virtual* participation in all that he has done, and is doing as their

* Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, pages 36—45.

† Page 36.

representative,"* but directly to prove that no such result as the objector insinuated, *could* flow from the doctrine of free grace which he had declared. The *state* in which believers were placed through Christ, made it *impossible* for them to live in sin, and hence they *could not continue in sin, that grace might abound*. Allow me, after your example, to give "a free translation" of the first six verses. Your "free translation," you say, "could be well defended," but as I have little *faith* in your declaration, I ask you, why did you not defend it, as you must have been sensible that it would be thought indefensible? I mean not to say how "well" the following translation may "be defended," but you may find a defence of it by consulting Fraser on Sanctification. "How shall we judge of this doctrine, that justification is wholly and merely by grace; even by grace superabounding where sin hath abounded? It seems, indeed, to be well calculated for those who find themselves destitute of righteousness; but is it not, at the same time, unfavourable to holiness and good works? For if it is to the glory of divine grace, that where sin hath abounded, grace doth much more abound; is it not a just inference, that we should continue in sin, that grace may be thus glorified? By no means, answers the apostle; how can it be supposed, that the grace, which in the superabounding thereof hath made us free from the reign of sin, hath not also provided various and effectual means, for preserving us from continuing in sin, and so coming again under its dominion? Therefore we are dead unto sin; for the rite of baptism, by which we are externally admitted into the church, doth signify and seal that fellowship in the sufferings and death of Christ, by virtue of which, as he died unto sin,† so we are dead unto sin. And as in that sacred ordinance we undergo a baptismal figurative burial, which demonstrates our being truly dead unto sin, that as Christ was raised from the dead

* Page 37.

† See verse 10.

by the glorious power and operation of the Father, even so we also should be engaged, disposed, and enabled to a new manner of life, in the inward and outward practice of holiness and righteousness. For if we who are believers are together ingrafted into Christ, and united to him, then by virtue of this union we are risen with him, and are by the power of his resurrection, raised to a new, active, and fruitful life of holiness. This, however, is not to be understood, as if this newness of life were already perfect. The old man of sin still remains in us, but he is crucified in virtue of Christ's atonement, and the effect of this crucifixion is, that this old man, the body of sin, is deprived of his force and reigning power, is enervated and enfeebled; so that henceforth we are not in servitude to it, or under its dominion, though it remaineth in us."* Now, accommodating your own words, "I would ask any candid man if these verses *do not* contain a *complete* solution of the difficulty stated in the first verse." Their object is to show that from the believer's connection with Christ, he *could not* continue in sin. Those who were, in consequence of the death and resurrection of Christ *dead to sin*, would, as a necessary consequence, *walk in newness of life and be in the likeness of his resurrection*. From your paraphrase you conclude "that the question in the first verse refers not to the principle of sin; but to the continuing in a state of condemnation."† This conclusion may be drawn from your paraphrase, but it has no connection with the Apostle's meaning. By its passing through your mind, you have made it literally your own, and the Apostle has no more to do with your conclusion than with your forced interpretation of his reasoning. In opposition, however, to your conclusion, I affirm, that the language of the Apostle refers his meaning expressly to *the principle of sin*, and not, as you say, to the *state of con-*

* See Fraser on Sanctification, pages 39—66.

† Page 39.

demnation. From the bearing of the context, it must be *sin*. He anticipates the objection to the doctrine of free grace, which some might say would encourage sin. "What shall we say then to such? Continue in sin! Can we do an impossibility? Can we at the same time be free from sin, and yet continue under it? Impossible." Independently, too, of the Apostle's reasoning, the very words he uses prove that he refers to the principle of sin, and if so, our translation is correct, and your "*state of condemnation*" has no place in the verse. Paul knew enough of Greek to have found the proper word to express *condemnation* had that been the idea in his mind, and by looking at the 16th verse of the 5th chapter, you will find that he has expressed *condemnation* by its proper Greek term *κριμα*, which word, or its equivalent *κρισις*, is, as far as I can find, invariably used in the New Testament to express *condemnation*.* There is as much difference between *sin* (*αμαρτια*) and *condemnation* (*κριμα*) as there is between cause and effect. In the Scriptures they are never to my knowledge used the one for the other. To render *αμαρτια* by *condemnation*, is to confound cause and effect. *Condemnation* is the effect of *sin*, the state into which *sin* has placed us, but it is not *sin itself*, any more than heat is the sun, or your assertion *yourself*. You say, however, that *αμαρτια* evidently bears this signification through the preceding chapter. This I deny, unless you are allowed at your pleasure to confound thought and language. Let us try one passage, and they are all similar. In the 12th verse it is said, "death is by sin" (*αμαρτια*). Now, who would say that death is by *condemnation*, the effect, when *sin*, the cause, states directly its origin? As the latter part of the 1st verse depends upon the correct rendering of the first clause, we might take it for granted that when that is wrong, the other must be so

* As examples, see John iii. 19, and v. 24—Romans viii. 1. James iii. 1, and v. 12.—Jude 4.

likewise. Our proof of your mistake, however, is more substantial; for, to establish your paraphrase, even the words in the latter clause have a sense attached to them which is quite unnecessary, except for the purpose of perverting their meaning. It is an easy matter to lay down *data*, but no inference should be deduced without decisive proof. “Πλεονάζω,” you say, “relates to number and variety; περισσεύω relates to quantity and extension.” This is the foundation of your theory for altering the word from *abound* to *multiply*. And what though it is πλεονάζω and not περισσεύω; is *multiply* the exclusive meaning of the one, and *abound* of the other? Suppose you had been amanuensis to the Apostle, and when he said πλεονάζω, you had written περισσεύω, would the substitution of the one word for the other have altered in any degree his meaning? Not in the least—the words are equivalent, and are used indifferently in Scripture for *abundance*, either in number or quantity. We take the words, therefore, as they are in the verse, and ask you, where is your distinction recognised? Πλεον or πλειον in its uncompounded state, sometimes refers to number, but as frequently to quantity; and when compounded it signifies increase merely, and hence in the New Testament it is generally rendered *abound*, and never *multiply*. As your translation of this passage is incorrect, of course the conclusions you draw from it are so likewise. You conclude that the reasoning of the Apostle tends to show that the death of Christ has removed the condemnation from *all men*, and that consequently *all are pardoned*. From what I have shown to be the Apostle’s meaning, I hope it is evident that such a conclusion cannot be deduced from his reasoning, but that its design is to prove that the state in which believers had been placed, rendered it impossible for them to live in sin.

The passage in question, you think, if taken in the sense you have attached to it, lays the *axe* to the root of the common system of Divinity. It has been your misfortune, however, to aim an oblique blow, and your axe, instead of

striking the tree, and bringing it down headlong as you expected, has only fallen into the water. You cannot, like one who in days of old was in a similar predicament, try to excite sympathy for your loss by saying "it was borrowed"; for I must do you the justice to say that your translation, with all the merit of the sophistical ingenuity displayed in it, is entirely your own; neither can you expect that a miracle will be performed for its recovery. The best advice I can give you is, to allow your axe to rest in peaceful harmlessness under the water; and never to usurp the forester's "lawful calling" in future, till you have well examined both your instrument, and the tree on which you intend to exert your muscular powers, that you may have some probability of succeeding, and not again lose your axe without accomplishing your purpose.

Your simile of the the dying father forgiving his offending son* is not applicable to the case you intend to illustrate.—There is a wide difference between a father forgiving *absolutely* his son, and then dying, leaving the son necessarily to reap the benefits of his forgiveness, and our heavenly Father living and offering us forgiveness through a medium accessible only by grace. You afterwards suppose that the person who informed the son of his forgiveness "puts the whole history into the form under which the gospel is *very often* preached, and says to him, Your father has forgiven you, if you believe in my testimony of his forgiveness; but if you cannot do this, there is no forgiveness for you."† Allow me Sir, to ask you, have you "*very often*"—have you *even once* heard the gospel preached in this form? I never have; nor do I think there is a Clergyman in the Church of Scotland who does preach in that manner. With regard to its application in your example, I observe, that the son could not be addressed with such an unmeaning message. "The truth of a past fact" *cannot* "depend on the state of feeling

* Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, page 21. † Ditto page 22

with regard to it." If the father did in reality forgive the son, the statement of a credible witness was a sufficient warrant for the son to enjoy the benefits resulting from this forgiveness. We are the sons of God by creation, and are offered forgiveness, but not in the manner in which a dying parent forgives his son, for the very belief which we are required to exercise must be bestowed on us by God ; and we know of its existence, only from its effects.

Of the parable spoken by our Lord to Simon,* you observe, that "the very essence of the truth taught in this parable is that all men are forgiven, and that each man's salvation arises out of the belief of his own personal condemnation having been removed by his own personal forgiveness."† I object to your premises, and consequently cannot allow your conclusion. The illustration used in parables, and the application of that illustration are very different. The former is fictitious, and the inference deduced from it shows its application to matters of doctrine or duty. There are very few parables which will apply in every particular to the objects intended to be illustrated. For example, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the illustration is connected with circumstances evidently fictitious, and combined merely for the purpose of enforcing the moral of the parable. Again, in the case of the good Samaritan, the illustration is connected with probable circumstances for the same reason. The illustration, therefore, is only the *dress*, not the *essence* of the parable. There may be circumstances connected with it which convey what is not true in fact, but these do not invalidate the moral of the parable. The illustration is generally intended to convey instruction in a lively and forcible manner, by calling in the aid of the imagination. Not attending to this distinction, is one cause of your mistake, for you deduce from the illustration a doctrine with which the parable has no connection. Our Saviour's design

* Luke vii. 41—50.

† Introd. Essay, &c. page xlii.

in uttering this parable may be learned from the context.—The Pharisee who entertained him was self-righteous, and despised others, and on this account had confidence before God. Our Lord, therefore, with this man, had two ends in view: 1st, Out of his own mouth to shew the reason of the woman's conduct; and 2d, To prove that he was not only a prophet, but more than a prophet. To accomplish the first of these objects, he states the supposed case of the two debtors; the one resembling the case of the woman, the other that of Simon. "The one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty." Simon, though self-righteous, would still allow that he was comparatively guilty, and therefore, our Lord draws a comparison between his supposed guilt and that of the woman, which he himself would willingly admit; viz: as fifty to five hundred; or in other words, a trifling to an enormous sum. The inference which Simon would draw from this part of the illustration would be just what our Saviour enforces as an apology for the conduct of the woman. The Pharisee reckoned his debt to God trifling; the woman had more correct views of her state, and according to her views, so were her feelings and actions. He felt as one who required no great forgiveness; she felt as one who had much to be forgiven. Was Simon forgiven as you say? We have no proof that he was. The first part of the parable is an illustration merely, and in the application of it our Lord does not say to Simon, as he does to the woman, that *his sins are forgiven*. His case in the illustration is a supposed one, and the inference is *particular* only with respect to the woman. And why particular in declaring the forgiveness of her sins? To shew Simon that our Lord actually knew "what manner of woman she was that touched him," and that he not only knew her state, but could declare her forgiveness. In the woman's case we have good evidence of a renewed heart—contrition, humility, and love; and even on these grounds might not a common observer have given a favourable decision on her state before God? I must remind you however, who it was that declared her sins were forgiven.

It was "he who searches the heart, and tries the reins of the children of men." It was he who has "the keys of the kingdom of heaven; who shutteth, and no man openeth; and who openeth, and no man shutteth." It was the covenant head—the "Alpha and Omega," who sits on the right hand of God, "giving repentance to Israel, and the remission of sins." He *could* declare, and *did* declare of this woman's state, what no one else could; and what he said to her is not applicable, *without a direct revelation*, or the evidence of a holy life, to any other son or daughter of Adam. Though this woman, therefore, obtained a knowledge of pardon, it was by a direct revelation, and connected, besides, with evidence which shewed that the good work was begun, which the Spirit would carry to perfection; and therefore the Lamb of God, opening the book of the Father's record, declared, as Judge, her state in law before God, of which state she gave proof by her actions. In other words, by the change on her heart and life her sanctification was manifested; and the Saviour, by saying, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," expresses not only her state before God by being justified, but also what she possessed in consequence of her justification, viz: pardon.

My inference, therefore, is, that there is no application made of the illustration to the case of Simon—we have no proof that he was pardoned; and thus the conclusion you deduce from it is entirely without foundation. If you will establish your doctrine on such grounds, you must first prove from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, that the saints in heaven actually lie in Abraham's bosom; that there is a real "gulph fixed" between heaven and hell; and that yet the inhabitants of the one place hold conversation with those of the other; and from the parable of the ten virgins, that the number of mere religious professors, and of those who are in truth the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, is exactly equal.

But even although you had proved that Simon's sins were pardoned, this could not have established the doctrine that

all men's sins are pardoned. Granting that Simon was pardoned,—who pronounced the pardon? Was it not he whose prerogative it is to forgive sin? And is there a single word in the whole passage, which, even on this supposition, proves that *all* are pardoned?

You have fallen into another strange error with regard to repentance. “Repentance,” you say, “is just faith in the gospel;”^{*} and again, “True repentance and faith are just the same thing.”^{*} Surely the great apostle of the Gentiles did not think so, for he informs the elders of the church at Ephesus that he “testified both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.”[†] It will require more than all the sophistry of which you are master, to convince me that the apostle here does not mean two distinct things. According to your view of repentance, the sacred writers have been guilty of the most unmeaning pleonasms, for they frequently mention repentance and faith consecutively. If *repentance* signifies *faith*, to *repent* must signify to *believe*, and the meaning of the following passage, “For godly sorrow worketh repentance, to salvation, not to be repented of,”[‡] according to your theory, will be: “*For godly sorrow worketh faith, to salvation, not to be believed.*” Now, what is the meaning of this? Is it not absolute nonsense? And yet, if you legitimately follow out your own theory, you must allow that it is the sentiment of an inspired apostle.

Repentance, you say, is merely a change of mind. This undoubtedly is the literal meaning of the word; but is there not, nay, must there not be connected with this change of mind, a deep contrition, sorrow for sin, and humiliation before God? Your adherents expressly say that there is not, and that if these feelings are connected with a sinner's turning to God, they are not only unnecessary, but are the genuine indications of a self-righteous spirit. That these

^{*} Introd. Essay, &c. page lxi. [†] Acts xx. 21. [‡] 2 Cor. vii. 10.

feelings, however, are necessarily connected with the return of a sinner, is evident from the language employed in Scripture to denote this change. One or two passages will be sufficient to establish the fact. "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even unto me with all your heart, and *with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning*, and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God."* "Wherefore, I abhor myself, and *repent in dust and ashes*."† "Now I rejoice," says the apostle in writing to the Corinthians, "not that ye were made sorry, but that *ye sorrowed to repentance*.—For *godly sorrow worketh repentance, to salvation*, not to be repented of,"‡ "He (Esau) found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully *with tears*."|| These passages, and the general tenor of Scripture on this subject, clearly prove that sorrow for sin, contrition, and humiliation, form the very essence of genuine repentance, and they may perhaps satisfy some of your wilfully blind followers, who lately expressed their surprise where clergymen had found the idea that sorrow has any connection with repentance. The very nature of a change from sin to holiness, and from the service of Satan to the service of God, must imply sorrow, even although the connection between them had not been so expressly declared in the word of God. It is absolutely impossible for any one to turn to God, without at the same time seeing sin to be in itself an evil of the greatest magnitude, and fraught with consequences of the most dreadful kind. The true penitent, viewing the character of God as transcendently glorious and holy, and regarding his law as supremely excellent and important, will feel that obedience to this law is the only true happiness, and disobedience to it the greatest misery. Conscious of the debasement which sin has produced in his character, he will be deeply affected with a sense of his unworthiness. This will lead him to loathe himself as degrad-

* Joel ii. 12, 13. † Job xlii. 6. ‡ 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10. || Heb. xii. 17.

ed by sin, and to hate that which has been the cause of his debasement, not only on account of its effects, but as it is displeasing to the immaculate holiness of God. Stung to the heart with shame, remorse, and contrition, he will unburden his surcharged soul in the language of humble confession, and implore of that righteous Being whom he has offended, "mercy to pardon, and grace to help in every time of need."

Genuine repentance is necessarily followed by reformation. The penitent undertakes not this, however, in his own strength, but in an humble, yet firm reliance on the gracious assistance of his heavenly Father. Feeling his own inability to perform any good action, he exclaims, "Who is sufficient for these things?" and looking up at the same time with confidence to his God, he adopts the language of Elihu: "Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more; that which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more."* On your system, a sinner, in turning to God, possesses none of these feelings. All is joy and confidence. In saying that there is joy connected with repentance, you are correct; but your error consists in making this the only feeling, when in reality, it is but one of many feelings, and by no means the strongest. The true penitent possesses, even in the depth of his humiliation, "a joy with which a stranger doth not intermeddle;" but this is not the predominating feeling in his breast—it is connected with much that is painful to flesh and blood, and even after the first burst of contrition is over, his joy is mingled with trembling.

Your system you think preferable for three reasons. "1st, Because it is fitted to draw the soul from self to God, and thus to sanctify it, at the same time that it gives it peace. 2d, Because the common system renders it very difficult to

* Job xxxiv. 31, 32.

press the warnings and precepts, and exhortations of the Bible. And 3d, Because it gives a contracted and mercenary tone to the mind."* With regard to the first of these reasons, I grant that the belief of a pardon embraced and secured may give peace, but it is not the peace of the gospel—it is not the peace which the Psalmist recognises: "Great peace have they which love thy law." It is a false peace, arising from the belief of what is not contained in revelation, and entirely different from the peace of the true believer, founded on the atonement, and the operation of the Spirit producing in him the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Besides, instead of "drawing the soul from self to God," your system has a direct tendency to make all the affections centre in *self*; its very commencement is founded in selfishness, and, to use your own expression, "every step which is made in it is just a farther training and hardening in selfishness." Our system, on the contrary, draws the soul of the sinner from self to God, by showing him his state of condemnation; and humbling him under a sense of his utter inability to do any thing for his recovery; and being thus led to place all hope of salvation in the merits and mediation of Christ, he is sanctified, not by his *belief*, but by the gracious operation of the Spirit of God, enabling him to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

Your second reason is a begging of the question. We have good ground for believing that our opinion on the subject is that stated in the Bible, and therefore, if the Great Preacher of righteousness, and those whom he sent, found no difficulty in pressing the warnings, and precepts, and exhortations of the Bible, how can the ministers of the gospel at the present day have any difficulty, if they follow their example? Besides, where lies the difference? Is it not as easy to press the warnings, precepts, and exhortations of the Bible upon those who believe that God is not only able

* Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, pages 168, 169, and 171.

but willing to pardon them, if they accept of Christ, as upon others who believe that they are pardoned, but require something else to make this pardon take effect? Acceptance is required in the one case—no more is required in the other. You must believe that you are pardoned before you can enjoy the hope of heaven; and I believe that I will receive pardon if I take Christ as he is offered in the gospel. Faith, however, on our system, is not a condition any more than upon yours. Your faith is subsequent to your pardon—mine is coincident with my pardon; or, if you will have it otherwise, my faith, in terms, though not in time, precedes my pardon. It is therefore as easy to accept of Christ by a faith *inwrought* by the Spirit, as to accept of a pardon “by a power which has been conferred on all;” and consequently the difficulty of pressing the warnings, precepts, and exhortations of the Bible, exists only in your own imagination. The charge contained in your third reason is altogether unjust. It is a most erroneous view of the matter to say, or rather to suppose, that we can bargain with God about salvation. In every sense of the term, salvation is of grace. We receive all, and offer God nothing. You receive pardon through grace—so do I. Do I offer my faith for my pardon? No—I receive the pardon by faith, but even this faith I must receive. This view, instead of contracting, expands the mind. It produces in it humility and gratitude. Your view may produce one feeling expansively enough, namely, joy, but my Bible teaches me to tremble as well as to rejoice. A mercenary tone, then, can never be contracted, when there is on the one hand an all-bountiful Benefactor, and on the other an impoverished recipient. We look up to God and use the language of adoring gratitude; we look into ourselves, and adopt the language of the deepest abasement. This view explains the language of the Bible, which yours never can.

The manner in which you interpret those passages* which

* Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, page 176—180.

you say "appear to represent pardon as a gift bestowed upon believing," is very convenient for your system, but not quite so convincing as you may imagine. I take the first you have quoted as an example. Acts ii. 38, "Then Peter said, repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Christ, for the remission of sins;" thus rendered by you: "Repent, or rather change your minds; and let every one of you be baptised into the doctrine of forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake." Our authorised version of this passage, is, I think, correct, or nearly so. Allowing that *εἰς* does signify *into*, and that it is generally connected with the direct object of baptism, as it is in the end of Matthew's Gospel, this will only give the following translation: "Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Christ, *into* the remission of sins." Your inserting the words "*the doctrine*" is entirely arbitrary. They are not in the text, and they form a supposed ellipsis supplied to answer your own views, and supported by supposed implication from other passages of Scripture. These words are very convenient for you, because a doctrine must exist prior to a belief in it, and therefore, by supplying these words, pardon appears to be unconnected with believing, which connection the verse in its literal rendering imports. Suppose any unbiassed person were requested to translate this verse, would he not do it as in our version; and if he were to pass *ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι*, &c., and take before it these words *εἰς ἀφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν*, would he not naturally suppose that there was a wresting of the passage for some particular purpose? Is it not more agreeable to the Greek language to take the order followed by our translators? The verse in the original directly implies that pardon is connected with belief; and you may twist it as you please, but you will never make it imply that there is a pardon or remission of sins through Christ unconnected with faith. The former is the doctrine contained in the verse; the latter is a doctrine of your own. Much has been said of the liberties which Socinian writers take with the words of inspiration, but I

think that in this respect you have far outstripped the boldest of their "*improved versions*." No passage appears too hard for you to press into your service, if it will not do by supplying from your own imagination a few supposed ellipsis, you immediately stretch the words upon the rack of false criticism, and, like the familiars of the *Holy Inquisition*, force from them, while under the torture, a declaration which they would never otherwise have given. The falsity of the translation of several other passages which you have given, might be exposed in the same manner as that to which I have adverted, but as they are all somewhat similar, the above is sufficient to show the general plan upon which you proceed in your interpretations:—

“ Accipe nunc Danaum insidias, et crimine ab uno
Disce omnes.”

The quotation I am about to make from your “Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel” is perhaps too long, but as authors are in general well pleased to see their works quoted, I shall make no apology for inserting it entire.—“If the gospel” you say, “really consists in the proclamation, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,’ then ‘to believe the gospel is to believe that those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved.’ Well, then, I believe that those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved.—The question then comes to be, ‘do I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ myself?’ If I do, I am saved; if I do not, I am not saved. Then comes a doubt,—‘Have I any evidence of the sincerity of my faith?’ Surely I have been very unfaithful to my light. It is quite clear, that the mind cannot find firm footing in this way. It is an unravellable perplexity. But suppose the enquirer says, ‘Yes, I am sure that I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ;’ I only observe, that if he draws his hope from this fact of his believing, he is as far from the spirit of the gospel, as the

man who rests his hopes on his alms-deeds." * The reason why I have been at the trouble of transcribing this passage is, that I find, with the alteration of a very few words, it will apply equally well to your system. Here, then, is a description of your system nearly in your own words. "If the gospel really consists in the proclamation, 'believe *that thou art pardoned*, and thou shalt be saved,' then to believe the gospel is 'to believe that those who believe *they are pardoned* shall be saved.' Well, then, I believe that those who believe *they are pardoned* shall be saved.—The question then, comes to be, 'do I believe *that I am pardoned*?' If I do, I am saved; if I do not, I am not saved. Then comes a doubt,—'Have I any evidence of the sincerity of my *belief that I am pardoned*?' Surely I have been very unfaithful to my light. It is quite clear that the mind cannot find firm footing in this way. It is an unravellable perplexity. But suppose the enquirer says, 'Yes, I am sure that I believe *I am pardoned*;' I only observe, that if he draws his hope from this fact of his believing *that he is pardoned* he is as far from the spirit of the gospel, as the man who rests his hope on his alms-deeds." Does not this, Sir, exactly apply to your system? And if so, where is its boasted superiority?

The account of your serious man is truly ridiculous; you should rather have called him a man who could not give a reason of the hope that is in him. You know it is easy to make any man's faith appear ridiculous, but ridicule is not the test of truth. Deists represent, in shocking contradictions, the faith of the Christian; and without fancy, your own peculiar opinions may be most ridiculously represented. Perhaps you have had such a conversation with a serious man as you relate, and as I can furnish you with something of the same kind, it may, by your example, figure as well in my page as in yours. If you ask one who has lately entered the enchanted ground, what is his hope before

* Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, page 189

God ; he will answer, " I believe that in consequence of Christ's death pardon has been extended to all men, and therefore I am safe." If you say, " But although all men are pardoned, will not some be finally lost?" He will answer, " Undoubtedly, but that is because they do not believe in the pardon, and therefore cannot receive the benefit of it." Ask him, " But what evidence have *you* that *you* will receive the benefits of this pardon?" " I believe" he answers, " in the testimony of God, and all who do so will be saved." If you ask him again, what it is he believes, you will receive the same answer as formerly, " I believe that in consequence of Christ's death pardon has been extended to all men." Now, Sir, " is not this," to use your own words, " moving in a circle?" " Is it not absolutely nothing?" Does it not " appear that this man's hope is really founded on nothing at all, but what he conceives to be the favourable state of his own mind?" And is not all the confidence he has, in himself—in his own belief of the pardon?

ASSURANCE.

IF I have succeeded in proving that in the nature of things God can love those only who are renewed in the spirit of their mind, as this *effect* is subsequent to the first operation of faith, the awakened sinner is not, in the first instance, required to believe *that God loves him*. "God is angry with the wicked every day," and the awakened sinner fleeing from the wrath to come to the hope set before him in the gospel, has as yet no proof that God loves *him*. Nor indeed does he require this in the first actings of faith. Awakened to a sense of guilt, he pants after deliverance. The Avenger of blood pursuing, he is in haste to reach the city of refuge. Conscience, through the operation of the spirit, presenting to him the danger of his state, he exclaims with heartfelt earnestness, "What shall I do to be saved?" In this state of the work of grace in his heart, he is not yet created anew in Christ Jesus, and therefore, not being holy as God is holy, it is not God's love to *him* as an individual that he can, or indeed *should* cherish. In the first act of faith he considers God as full of compassion, because he sent his Son into the world to seek and to save that which was lost, and when the evidence of his belief appears in his walk and conversation, he knows that he has passed from death to life, and can join with the believers to whom John writes, in saying, "Hereby

do we know that we know him if we keep his commandments." *

Nor is the individual in whom the good work is begun required in the exercise of faith to believe *that Christ died for him*. Before the first act of faith, he was without God and without hope, and in this act he recognises God in the plan of redemption, full of tender relentings towards his fallen creatures, and willing through Christ to receive them again into his favour which they had forfeited by transgression. The first objects on which faith is exercised are the compassion which God has for guilty man, and the provision which he has made for their forgiveness and salvation.—The personal application of the benefits of Christ's death belongs to the subsequent actings of Faith. Connected with the exercise of this faith, is the act of justification,† and afterwards the enjoyment of the benefits attendant upon this act, in the progress of sanctification. By faith, therefore, the returning sinner believes that Christ has "finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness," and that through him the remission of sins *may be received*. Forgiveness can be obtained only through the atonement, and in the first act of faith the repentant sinner in believing finds peace. In a prison-house and bound with fetters, a way of deliverance is opened to his view, and he becomes a "prisoner of hope," and betakes himself to the

* 1 John ii. 3.

† "In respect of God's decree, the believer was justified from all eternity; and he was justified meritoriously in the death and resurrection of Christ: but yet he was not justified actually, till he did actually believe in Christ: as saith the Apostle, Acts xiii. 39., 'By him all that believe are justified.' So that in the act of justifying, faith and Christ must have a mutual relation, and must always concur and meet together; faith as the action which apprehendeth, and Christ the object which is apprehended: for neither doth Christ justify without faith, neither doth faith except it be in Christ."—*Marrow of Modern Divinity*, page 216.

Almighty Deliverer in whom help is found. His faith, however, does not necessarily produce an *assurance of personal salvation*.

Faith embraces what is revealed,* but does not give revelations. What has been revealed concerning the nature and application of the atonement, is the proper subject of faith, but as there is no revelation respecting an awakened sinner's personal salvation, faith cannot embrace what has not been revealed. If the awakened sinner, therefore, connects with his belief in the atonement, a belief of his own personal salvation, the former is the faith of the gospel; the latter rests on grounds *out of* the Bible, and may be either true or false according to its foundation.

But though a belief of my own personal salvation is not required in justifying faith, may I not gain assurance of it from *the consciousness of believing*? If I accept by this act what is offered, may I not upon this ground my assurance of personal salvation? This question has a reference to two classes of individuals, who have the same opinions with regard to consciousness of believing, but differ in the object of that consciousness. The one is conscious of believing not only that Christ died for sinners, but likewise of appropriating to himself the benefits which Christ procured, and hence he has his assurance; the other is conscious of believing that he has embraced the general pardon which he supposes Christ procured by his death, and hence he has assurance. To both these classes we object, because they are comparing things temporal with things spiritual. The act of the mind exercised in the faith connected with earthly things, as to the object or objects on which it acts, is very different

* "Faith," says the Apostle, "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The term *faith*, however, in this passage, must be understood to mean that realising sense of spiritual things, which induces the believer to act at all times as if the realities of eternity were present to his bodily sight; and in this sense, the passage does not contradict the above assertion.

from that exercised in the faith of the gospel. In the one case the consciousness rests on what is proved by present evidence ; in the other, on what has to be developed. I do not receive salvation either *by* believing or *in* believing, but *in* believing I am conscious of the act exercised, because this is of myself, but the gift connected with the act is a separate thing, and cannot be known by consciousness of itself exclusively. Not so in the faith exercised in temporal matters. Mr. Erskine has written a book, I believe this, and am conscious of believing what is true, because my belief refers to a fact, of which I am satisfied by evidence. I am conscious of believing that a friend has left me a legacy, because I have documents proving the fact, and I am sure of receiving the legacy, because it is expressly mentioned that it is for me, and no other. In every case, therefore, I can be conscious of the act of my own mind, but the object to which this act has a reference, can, in the most of cases, be made known to me only by evidence. In temporal matters I can at once come to a conclusion if the evidence is satisfactory, so that the consciousness of believing, and the assurance of enjoying, may be simultaneous. Had I a view of the book of God's remembrance, I would read my own name, if there inserted, and from this evidence I would likewise have, simultaneously, a consciousness of believing, and an assurance of personal salvation. Of my belief I would be conscious, because it is my own personal act, and of the other I would be conscious or assured, from the testimony of the records of heaven's Chancery. In this case my consciousness of believing the act of my own mind would be consequent to the belief of my personal salvation, because strictly speaking, the evidence is prior in time to the act of its reception, though their appearance is simultaneous.—And is not this the case with every awakened sinner? Of the the act of believing, he is conscious, and this act must rest on something already finished ;—and so it does ; it rests on the atonement. This is the burden of Revelation, and in the outgoings of his faith, his mind travels over the record,

and rejoices in the discovery of a finished salvation. He wants, however, the assurance of his personal salvation; and he must want it till his faith can rest on some object fitted to give this assurance. It cannot rest on a past object, for that is *knowledge in possession*, but on the effects of faith—a something to come. It must arise, then, from an immediate revelation, or if this is not received, from the only remaining source of assurance—*personal holiness*.

One great cause of error on this subject, is mistaking peace for assurance. Peace—a great peace—even a perfect peace, may be enjoyed without assurance. The thief on the cross had assurance of personal salvation from immediate revelation. The woman who washed our Saviour's feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, had assurance of personal forgiveness from the same source. Paul gave to the Philippian jailer *not assurance, but peace*, when he instructed him in the knowledge of that salvation procured by the atonement. The Ethiopian eunuch found *peace* in believing the record of God concerning his Son, and went on his way rejoicing in the faith which justifies. Paul was a chosen vessel of the Lord, and this he knew, but the ground of his assurance of personal salvation, was personal holiness. The Apostles rejoiced that their names were written in heaven, but it is remarkable that they always refer to the evidence of their sanctification, as the ground of their personal assurance. "We know," says John, "that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."*

Can there not, then, be connected with a consciousness of believing, the assurance of personal salvation? The one is not the cause of the other, and if they are connected, their connection is not a necessary result, but an adventitious circumstance, which may be traced to another cause. Independently of immediate revelation, there may, indeed, be such an impression made on the mind, that even through the

* 1 John, iii. 14.

consciousness of believing, the Spirit may give as much *peace* as is necessary for the believer's comfort; but this, though sufficiently satisfying to the mind, is distinct from assurance. It produces a similar effect, but is as distinct from it as trust is from possession, or assured hope from actual enjoyment. The individual, besides, who has such a vivid impression, from mere consciousness, of God's being his friend, enjoys from it personal comfort, but not personal assurance. Like the Apostles, and other saints mentioned in Scripture, he frequently has mental depression on account of the remains of indwelling sin, but the witness of the Spirit, in his personal sanctification, will satisfy him of the certainty of his personal salvation.

In the Scriptures, saints use not at all times the language of assurance. This may easily be accounted for, if we refer their personal assurance to their personal holiness, for as this admits of degrees, in proportion as it rises or falls will be the language employed to express their feelings of personal safety. But consciousness does not admit of degrees. The act of the mind is invariable, and if it can give assurance at one time, all its acts must produce similar results. If its varying results are referred to the object on which it rests, then we agree; and the feelings of personal safety will not proceed from consciousness, but from evidence, and as is the strength of the evidence, so will be the language employed concerning our personal state.

To say that assurance admits of degrees, is a contradiction in terms. This mistake has arisen from the comparative manner in which it appears to be employed in Scripture. We read of "full assurance," of "rich assurance," &c. and hence some conclude that assurance may exist in a weaker and stronger state. The comparative terms, however, have no connection with assurance, but refer to the words to which assurance has a reference. The "full assurance of hope," for example, expresses not the degree of assurance, but of hope; and in like manner every noun to which assurance is applied, admits of degrees. The under-

standing may be more or less enlightened—faith may be more or less strong—and hope more or less vivid ; but assurance has a fixed idea, and admits not of degrees.

Although the term *assurance* seldom occurs in the New Testament, yet it has three distinct significations, according to the quality of mind to which it is referred. The first is, the “full assurance of understanding,” which consists of a clear, comprehensive, and enlightened knowledge of divine truth as revealed in the word of God. The second is the “full assurance of faith,” which implies a firm, unshaken, and decided belief of the statements of revelation, and a cordial reception of these statements, especially in reference to the plan of redemption through Christ. This assurance is possessed by every true believer, and is essential to the nature of faith. It has no connection, however, with the belief of personal salvation, as that is not a subject of revelation. The third kind of assurance mentioned in Scripture, and that which has for its object personal salvation, is the “full assurance of hope.” In proportion as the believer grows in conformity to the image of God, he enjoys an increasing sense of God’s favour, and when he does attain to “full assurance of hope,” he possesses a firm expectation that God will, without doubt, complete the good work of grace in his soul, and ultimately grant him the full enjoyment of that blessedness which he has in store for those who love him, who are the called according to his purpose. That this assurance is attainable, and has been attained by many, is proved by the experience of the people of God, recorded in his own word ; and it should be the earnest endeavour of every child of God to attain it ; to “press forward to the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ ;” and not to rest satisfied till he has made his “calling and election sure.” This assurance, however, cannot be attained by the mere consciousness of believing, but must be founded on the evidence of the Spirit’s work on the heart, by a “walk and conversation becoming the gospel.”

It is of great importance to understand clearly the nature

of faith, or the quality of mind exercised in believing.—Faith, as an intellectual act, may end in the understanding, but as the faith of the gospel is chiefly a moral act, it is said, “With the heart faith exists unto righteousness;”^{*} and therefore the proper quality of mind exercised in faith, is, by some, supposed to be trust or confidence. This is an excellent definition of the nature of justifying faith, and is defective chiefly from the manner in which it is too frequently applied. The confidence which I exercise in a fellow creature, of the fulfilment of whose promise to me I can have no doubt, is exactly the same as the faith of the gospel with regard to the quality of mind exercised, but not as to the circumstances to which this quality of mind has a reference. The promise of a fellow creature has a specific reference to an individual, and therefore admits of a personal application; but the promises of God in redemption are to those who believe, without any personal reference more direct than that founded on the evidence of personal holiness. The believer can have no doubt of the fulfilment of God’s promises, but his confidence rests on the faithfulness of him who has made them, and not on the way in which they may be applied. The believer is as sure that those who believe will not perish, as he is that God has sent his Son into the world; but as his belief shows itself only by evidence, his assurance is only so far personal as his personal evidence substantiates the genuineness of his belief. Dr. Dwight, in one of his discourses on faith, endeavours to prove from the conduct of Abraham, that the quality of mind exercised in evangelical faith, is merely confidence. In this the Doctor is correct, but overlooking the distinction which I have stated, his conclusion that the faith of Abraham was the same as evangelical faith, may be misapplied. All the promises which Abraham had with respect to Isaac, were of a specific kind, and he had confidence that they

^{*} Romans, x. 10. as rendered by Dr. Dwight.

would be fulfilled, and therefore, as they had a personal reference, they admitted of, or rather, they necessarily required, a personal application. His faith in this respect, connected with Isaac, was of a personal nature, and was counted unto him for righteousness, because he was fully persuaded that what God had promised, he would perform. But Abraham saw also the day of Christ afar off, and was glad, and in the faith he exercised in the promise of a coming Saviour, there was the same confidence which he exercised with regard to the promise respecting Isaac; with this difference, however, that in the one there was necessarily a personal application, from the very nature of the promise, while in the other he had merely confidence in God, and the personal application of the promise was subsequent to his belief, and rested on the evidence of his faith, in his personal holiness. "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," was the one promise, and as he could not doubt this, he accounted that God could raise him from the dead, and therefore this particular promise had a particular application. The other, referring to redemption, was, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Of the fulfilment of this likewise, he could not doubt, but the extent of these general terms, or their individual application, was not the ground of his confidence with regard to himself. Without a particular revelation, he could be assured of his personal salvation, only by his personal holiness. Besides, even though Abraham lived by faith, and possessed that faith without which it is impossible to please God, it does not follow, that his faith was connected with personal assurance. He was justified, for his faith was reckoned unto him for righteousness.* You confound† the knowledge *we* possess of Abraham's state, from revelation, with that which Abraham himself possessed. God reckoned his faith to him for righteousness,—so says revelation to us; but had Abraham himself

* See Romans iv. 9, 11, 12. † See Uncon. Freeness, &c. page 180.

such a revelation? If he had, his personal assurance was founded on a personal revelation; if he had not, his personal assurance must have been founded on the evidence of his personal holiness.

Towards God, therefore, every believer exercises confidence, or I may even say, *assurance*. The promises of God in Christ are all yea, and in him, amen. There is no doubt of God's fulfilling his promises. In him the believer has absolute assurance. With regard to his own personal application of these promises, however, the matter is different. Instead of assurance he now possesses dependence, and this dependence for his own personal safety will partake more or less of the nature of confidence, according to the evidence which he shows of his conformity to God's law. Hence, while on the one hand, from confidence in God's character, he loves, admires, and adores; from dependence for personal safety resting on the evidence of personal holiness, he will have humility and every grace of the Christian character.

But can the believer not appropriate to himself the benefits of Christ's atonement, so as to say, "Christ died for *me*."? The appropriation connected with justifying faith is not assurance, but dependence. This dependence is simply trust, which has respect to a future benefit, and if I appropriate more than is actually offered, I am deceiving myself. This may be beautifully illustrated at a death-bed. If the sufferer has led a life of indifference to religion, and has fearful misgivings concerning futurity, I, in directing him to look to "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world," tell him to place his confidence in him, as the only ground of confidence. A death-bed repentance I believe to be a possibility, and the Spirit, giving him enlightened views of redemption, and of God's character therein displayed, he has the utmost assurance that God will fulfil all that he has promised. Fixing his mind on God, his fears respecting a way of escape from the wrath to come are quieted, and from the contemplation of the character of God manifested in the plan of redemption, his sympathies

are engaged on the side of God, and the suspicions which he entertained of God's willingness to save such as he, are banished, for "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." His peace is derived entirely from his consciousness of having confidence in the character of God. As to his personal safety, he appropriates to himself by faith the God-head beseeching him to be reconciled, and this, his guarantee of salvation, leads him to expel from his mind every distrustful thought, and leaving his personal salvation in the hands of an all-wise and compassionate God, he rejoices in the Lord, and is glad in the God of his salvation. If he is conscious of possessing a firm and unshaken belief in God, there is around him a defence which Satan cannot penetrate, and being confident in God for the fulfilment of all his promises, and having a child-like dependence on him for his *personal salvation*, he has an assured hope of which he will never be ashamed. Entering into the spiritual vineyard, he is a servant whom his Lord will recognise, and in so doing, silence every cavil, by exercising his sovereignty in doing what he will with his own. And oh! is not this a man prepared to take the harp of God, and hymn his Maker's praise? His pride has been subdued, his enmity overcome, and his love set on flame. He died with *assurance*, but without *personal assurance*. He possessed in his heart below, the meetness for heaven, and the pardon being recorded above, the grace of his heavenly Father secured for him the rich inheritance of the saints in bliss. He enjoyed confidence in God's character, exemplified in redeeming love, and a mind assimilating to those of the celestial inhabitants. How wonderful the transformation! A calling from darkness to light—a new creation, more astonishing than that of the universe, when at the Almighty *fiat* of Jehovah, it arose from the "undigested mass of chaos." Suppose another person, in the midst of a life of wickedness, suddenly arrested by a disease which precludes all hope of recovery. Conscience, aroused from the deadly lethargy into which, by a long continuance of crime, it had been lulled,

exposes to his affrighted view his guilty soul, naked, trembling, and polluted—shows him the terrors of the Lord arrayed against him in awful majesty—and points to a violated law, calling aloud for satisfaction. In the anguish of mind produced by such a discovery, whither can he look—whither can he flee for comfort? He dares not look backward upon his past life, for it is stained with crimes of the deepest die—he trembles to anticipate the future, for his mind realises the “fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.” He tries to look inward, but shrinks back with horror at beholding a soul covered with the leprosy of sin, and all unfit to appear before the bar of God—he casts a despairing glance upward, but he beholds an incensed Deity waving over his head the flaming sword of Divine justice. Thus tortured with fear, anguish, and remorse, he is told that the God before whom he trembles is a God all love and compassion, and that influenced by this love, he has pardoned those sins for which he is so much alarmed, and if he will only believe in this pardon he will secure the happiness of heaven, and enjoy a peace of mind arising from the assurance of his personal salvation. Agonised with the forebodings of an awakened conscience, like a drowning man he grasps with avidity at any thing which can afford the slightest shadow of hope, and with the eagerness of despair embraces the offered pardon, and in so doing quiets his troubled mind, and enjoys peace from the belief that his sins have been blotted out in the blood of the atonement. But oh! is it not a false peace? Is it not an opiate to lull conscience again to sleep? Is there not reason to say of his spiritual advisers, “They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, peace, peace; when there is no peace?”* He feels gratitude indeed towards God for having delivered him from the terrors of the law, but is not this a purely selfish feeling, for a benefit supposed to be

* Jeremiah vi. 14.

received? True love to God he cannot have, for he has never had a proper view of his character as displayed in the plan of redemption; he has never had an enlightened view of the atonement of Christ, or of the harmony of God's moral attributes. He has not obtained that view of sin which inclines the heart to loathe it as that abominable thing upon which the immaculate Jehovah cannot look but with abhorrence and detestation. His feelings are all merged into one—joy for his deliverance from the curse of a violated law, and his freedom from the penalty denounced against transgression. His heart is still unsanctified; the pride of the natural man is still unsubdued; his will is yet opposed to the will of Omnipotence. Is this man in a fit state to appear in the presence of the Holy Lord God? Is he in a fit state to present himself before the bar of him “who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; in whose sight the heavens are not clean, and who charges even his angels with folly?”

You say that “there is a prodigious delusion contained in the answer, ‘we ought to submit to the will of God.’”^{*} In one sense you are correct; for many dream on through life, satisfied with the thought that they are not so wicked as some of their associates, and that their lives and deportment are so becoming, that God will not overlook their plausibilities of character, in deciding their eternal fate. When they are arrested in their worldly schemes by a fatal disease, summoning up the courage of the man, they become *resigned* to what they know they cannot avoid, and in taking farewell of time, they make a virtue of necessity, and pretend

To “leave the world without a tear,
Save for the friends they held so dear,”

and, in anticipating futurity, they calm their excited fears by a delusive trust in the general mercy of God. In this

* Introd. Essay, &c. page xiii.

way many thousands, in a dying hour, deceive themselves and their unthinking friends, when in reality they possess not the *genuine resignation* which acquiesces either in the providential dispensations of God, or in the plan of reconciliation which he has made known in his word. What more painful to a spiritualised mind than to hear a man, even when the tide of life is fast ebbing—the countenance ghastly and pale—the throes of expiring nature in convulsive movements heaving the breast—the eye becoming glazed—the extremities cold—and the blood retiring to the heart—attempting in faltering accents to assure his friends who stand weeping around his couch, that he is *resigned to die*, because nature, with a voice more distinct and impressive than the thunders of the Almighty, is declaring that he *must die*—and even though hostile in mind to the all-sufficient righteousness which the cross of Christ displays, declare that he trusts for future happiness to the mercy of God. Oh! with what feelings must the true Christian turn from such a scene! It is a sight sufficient to make angels weep, to see a man retiring from the world with the language of resignation on his lips, when there is no such feeling in his heart, and thoughtlessly rushing into the presence of God, trusting to a mercy—the phantasy of his own imagination, and in the blindness of the unrenewed mind, attempting unassisted, to scale the battlements of heaven, and take, in his own way, the crown of glory from the hands of Omnipotence.

This, however, is an abuse of language; and let us ever remember that counterfeit coin always implies the existence of that which is genuine. What is wrong in one case is right in another; and what one man calls *resignation* may proceed from improper principles, while another may possess *genuine resignation* to the will of God, and likewise a cordial acquiescence in the plan of redemption through Christ. I have more than once stood at the couch of the dying man, who in life walked with God, and in whom might be recognised a spirit meet for the inheritance of the saints in bliss.

A thousand ties bound him to the world, but he knew that his life was in the hands of an all-wise God, who best knew how to dispose of him, and this led him humbly to acquiesce in the will of his heavenly Father. Though destitute of personal assurance, he possessed the utmost confidence in God. He knew in whom he had believed, and that he was able to keep that which he had committed to him; and implicitly trusting that God would order all well concerning him, he could adopt the triumphant language of the Apostle: "For me to live is Christ, and to die great gain." His mind being filled with "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," a calm serenity overspread his countenance, and showed a soul prepared to await with resignation the final summons, and to wing its "mystic flight" to the regions of endless and unclouded day. If at this solemn time one of your adherents were to enter the sacred chamber, and tell this child of God that his resignation was entirely a delusion, that he was going down to the grave with a lie in his right hand, and that he must cast off his false hope, and return to the first rudiments of Christianity; would he not merit the appellation of a "miserable comforter;" or might we not say of him in your own pathetic language: "Alas! potsherd of the earth, Jesus weeps for him."

"Personal assurance," you say, "is nothing more or less than the faith of the gospel."* Even granting that they are synonymous terms, is there no change in the circumstances to which they respectively have a reference? But they are not the same, or if so, why use the term *faith*, or if you use *faith*, why retain *assurance*? Even on your own system you must acknowledge that *assurance* at least expresses a mode of *faith*, and is posterior to it, for I must believe before I can be assured that my belief will produce a certain effect.

Besides, Sir, what do you embrace by faith? Pardon.—Every man has this according to your theory, and all the

* Introd. Essay, &c. page xxxvi.

assurance that can be attained on your system is the assurance of possessing what all have received, and which, according to your own confession, although possessed, "admits of a man's being finally condemned."* Is this assurance of personal salvation? But *you possess a knowledge or sense of pardon*. Knowledge, however, is not salvation, any more than temperance, or any other fruit of the Spirit. Even admitting your theory to be correct, the only assurance it gives is *a sense of pardon*, and pardon is not salvation. Some where in your "Remarks on the Internal Evidence for the truth of Revealed Religion," you say that "holiness is heaven," but pardon neither produces holiness, nor is holiness:—Your system is totally unfit for man in his present state, it does not view him in the proper relation in which he stands towards God. You mistake the nature of the atonement, and take a very partial view of the end of Christ's death.—You overlook the wants of man as a sinner, alienated from God; and forget the fulness that is treasured up in Christ: While he saves, he purifies his people from sin, and in these two general terms are implied many modifications of redeeming power and sanctifying grace.

In the commencement of this controversy, the doctrine principally insisted on by your friends was, that personal assurance is essential to evangelical faith. In discussing this subject with one who had embraced your opinion, I stated that it was contrary to the judgement of almost every experienced Divine.† Their judgement was scouted with an air of contempt, and I was referred to the law and to the testimony. This was as it should be; but surely the circumstance of a doctrine's having been embraced by those who have drunk deep of the spirit of inspiration is at least a presumptive evidence of its truth, and it is safer, even to

* Introd. Essay, &c. page xlvii.

† Opinions respecting Assurance may, in a general way, be distinguished into three kinds: 1st, Assurance arising from the evidence of personal holiness. 2d, Assurance arising from the supposi-

err with such, than to be misled with the crude and unsettled fancies of novices in Theology. From the law and the testimony your adherents have been driven, and as a last resource have sought protection under the banners of the Reformers. The judgment of the Reformers, however, was not infallible. I confess, indeed, that for them I have a deep reverence, and I never think of Luther, Calvin, and other distinguished fathers of the Reformation, but I feel a deep breathing as in the presence of men of superior mould; and when my mind is relieved from awe and reverence for mighty talent and evangelical piety, the struggles of honourable emulation agitate my breast, and the rising wish of my heart drops from my lips—a portion of their spirit:—"My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." Champions in the cause of truth, I consider them endowed with minds too lofty and enterprising to employ their talents on the *minutiæ* of party differences. Giants in intellect, they attempted not to lop the branches of ignorance and sophistry, but concentrating all their energies, aimed a decisive blow at the root of error. They spent not their time in striving gradually to exhaust the strength of

tion, that in the act of justifying faith, the believer appropriates to himself the benefits of Christ's purchase. And 3d, Assurance founded on the belief that all are pardoned, and that the believer, by accepting this pardon, secures his personal safety. The first is the general opinion. It was defended in America by Edwards, Dwight, Bellamy, &c.; is held by the majority of eminent British Divines; and in this controversy, has been maintained by all the distinguished Clergymen who have hitherto written on the subject. The second opinion was defended by the Rev. Messrs. Marshall and Hervey, by the Rev. Mr. Anderson of America, and in the well known publication called "The Marrow of Modern Divinity." The third is the opinion at present controverted, and it should be carefully distinguished from the other two, which, although they differ from each other, are both in direct opposition to the Assurance connected with a general pardon.

the many-headed hydra, but with one mighty effort, endeavoured to crush the hideous monster.* It is not, however, to their writings chiefly that we must look for that spirit by which they were actuated, but to their actions and sufferings. Living in times of danger and perplexity, they had not so favourable an opportunity for laying down a clear system of Divinity, as if they had enjoyed peace and safety. Though possessed of astonishing powers of mind, still they were men, and they may not at all times have spoken according to the *form* of sound words. What is expressed ambiguously, however, in one part of their writings, is clearly stated in others; and we can discover their real sentiments better from the general bearing of their arguments, than from particular passages unconnected, and sometimes apparently contradictory. The use thereof which has been made of their writings by some of your friends, is as base as it is disingenuous. Were Luther, Calvin, and other worthies, now to rise from their graves, and see their works perverted to serve the end of a party, what a horrent frown

* To some it may appear a matter of surprise, that the doctrines of the Reformation have not, long ere now, completely exterminated Popery. This, however, can easily be accounted for. The accommodating system of Popery is well suited to the prevailing tendency of the carnal heart. It is not so much the religion of the Bible, as it is the Bible softened down to meet the wishes of man. As it has been justly remarked, "There are in its temporising policy power for the ambitious, obedience for the humble, employment for the active, vows for the rash, pardons for the faulty, miracles for the credulous, grandeur for the simple vulgar, and prayers for the devout. Who more pompous than Cardinals, more wealthy than Prelates, poorer than mendicants, more ignorant than mass priests—more strict in church laws, more lax in divine laws?" It is not, therefore, a matter of wonder that such a religion has not been easily subdued. We thank God that in his providence he has preserved even so many from falling a prey to its carnal seductions. In temporal things the maxim may sometimes be true, that "where ignorance is bliss, 'tis

would settle on their brows, and what awful anathemas would they pronounce against those who have misapplied their language and misinterpreted their sentiments, to give authority to doctrines which they abhorred. The doctrines of the Reformers, even allowing them to be different from the commonly received opinions, have not the most remote connection with the novelties of Gareloch, or the absurdities of your "Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel." Take Luther's words, even as expounded by his inveterate enemies at the Council of Trent, and they have no more connection with your *universal pardon* than with the reveries of Joanna Southcote. Not one of the Reformers ever said that all men are pardoned; the most that can be made of their words, even by the advocates for the doctrine of uni-

folly to be wise;" but it is the extreme of madness to suppose that in spiritual matters the same remark is applicable. Ignorance may conceal the nature and extent of guilt, but it will not prevent its awful consequences. The ignorant Catholic may commit his soul to the care of others, and having performed the prescribed rights of his church, confessed, and obtained absolution, in calm serenity he may breathe out his soul; but it requires a greater degree of charity than the Bible authorises, not to sigh over the departure of such a spirit; and dread its fate when it appears before the bar of God in the rags of self-righteousness. Such a covering is too narrow for a man to wrap himself in against the storms of Divine vengeance, which await those who trust for salvation through any other means than the imputed righteousness of Christ. Oh! how would the honest spirit of Paul, which fired at his countrymen for placing dependence on circumcision, burn within his breast, if in these latter days he saw Antichrist with unblushing front stalking through the land, and its votaries, unashamed of its mummery, glorying in tradition and ceremonies, and as much as possible withholding the word of God from their people. Could he bear the sight with indifference? Would he not tremble for the ark of his God, and with a brow lowering with honest indignation, repel these deceivers by saying, "Get behind, for you savour not the things which be of God, but the things which be of man?"

versal pardon, is, that assurance is necessarily connected with justifying faith. A Calvinist and a Socinian are as much agreed with respect to the end of Christ's mission, as the Reformers of the sixteenth century are with those of the present day regarding the controverted doctrines. These doctrines indeed are not new, for as Cicero said respecting philosophers, that there was nothing so absurd that they had not maintained ; so it may be said of religion, that there is nothing so repugnant to the word of God, or to common sense, that has not already found abettors. The heresy which you have adopted, was maintained, not by Luther, but by a heretic in the time of Luther.* Had it been said that the religious opinions generally entertained, are not exactly similar to those of the Reformers, we should then

* Opinions somewhat similar to yours, were entertained by the Rev. William Law, a mystic of the last century. He supposed that in consequence of the death of Christ, all men have in them the first spark or seed of the divine life, as a treasure hid in the centre of the soul, to bring forth by degrees, a new birth of that life which was lost in paradise ; and that no man can be lost, except by turning away from this Saviour within him. You suppose that in consequence of the death of Christ, all men enjoy pardon, which, if embraced, is fitted to restore them to the image of God which they have lost by sin, and that no man can be condemned, except by rejecting this pardon which has been procured for them. Mr. Law, in his writings, always represents the Deity as a God of universal love, who never can have any will towards his creatures but to communicate good. He asserts that there is no wrath standing between God and us, but that which is awakened in our own fallen nature, and that to quench this wrath, and not his own, God gave his only begotten Son to be made man. In these sentiments you entirely coincide with him, and the parallel is so exact, that it entitles you to rank high among the modern Mystics. Finally, Mr. Law believed in a final restoration of all mankind, after long periods of suffering ; and to this doctrine your system has a direct and necessary tendency, and in order to establish it among the other errors of your followers, it only requires from you, in your next publication, a decided avowal.

have given satisfactory reasons for the difference, real or supposed. They wrote mostly in Latin, and spoke in their vernacular language, for which reason there is a want of distinctness in their phraseology. Luther, though he wrote elegantly in German, was by no means a good Latin writer. Besides, owing to their peculiar circumstances, their ideas were overstrained. As in mechanics a certain action in one direction produces a corresponding re-action in a contrary direction, so in the operations of the mind. A pendulum elevated above its natural position, on being allowed to escape, will fly off in a direction contrary to that in which it was held ; so the mind, escaping from error, has a tendency to go beyond the straight line of truth, and adopt an extreme opposite to that of the error which it opposes. The great body of the Papists held the doctrine of justification by works, and justification by faith is a fundamental doctrine of the Reformers. In discussing the subject, however, it must be confessed that their expressions are occasionally so unguarded as at first sight to favour the supposition that they believed personal assurance to be included in faith ; but when we read their remarks on the evidence of our faith, and the proofs that we are accepted by God, it is evident that they held no such doctrine, but *founded assurance of personal salvation on personal holiness*. As a remarkable instance of the want of distinctness in their writings, it may be remarked, that the incautious language of Luther gave rise to Antinomianism. Some of his unguarded expressions, if followed out in their legitimate bearing, tend directly to this error ; and his contemporary, John Agricola, giving to these expressions their literal import, employed them to support his theory of Antinomianism. Luther's language being thus perverted, his sentiments assumed a new form, and Agricola found in him his most decided opponent.

These pamphleteers, though they have not the harmlessness of doves, are singularly gifted with the cunning of serpents. They know much about the days of old, the "departed spirits of the mighty dead," and of Catechisms

and forms of doctrine *formerly in use*, but they seem to have forgot our present church standards. Some diseases obliterate the remembrance of more remote facts, and leave the mind comparatively a blank, but they are affected with a disease of an opposite tendency. The Confession of Faith is too modern for these sapient lovers of the dust of antiquity; and our hundred and ten staunch Divines of Westminster are too much the men of yesterday to attract their notice.— They tell us indeed, that “the act of the Assembly, authorising the Westminster Confession, declares that it is approved, because in nothing contrary to the received doctrine of the Kirk,” and by a strange perversion of sound Logic, they lay down premises, and in quite the Aristotelian mode, by a sophistical syllogism, come to a conclusion contrary to fact. The Books they quote from, they say, were the former standards of the Church, and as the Westminster Confession is by an Act of the Assembly pronounced to be in nothing contrary to the received doctrine of the Church, they arrive at the conclusion that *the former standards must still be our standards, and that those who do not conform to them must in doctrine be contrary to that of our Church.* Wretched quibbling! A syllogism has frequently been made the vehicle of sophistry. Although the worthy Divines of Westminster approved of the general bearing of the ancient writings, the very circumstance of their employing different phrases on the subject of assurance, is proof sufficient that they considered the language of the Reformers indistinct, and liable to be misapplied. In their “Epistle to the Reader,” they say, “And indeed considering what a Babel of opinions, what a strange confusion of tongues, there is this day among them who profess to speak the language of Canaan, there is no intelligent person but will conclude that advice of the prophet especially suited to such an age as this: ‘To the law and the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.’” * The obscurity of the writings of the earliest Re-

* Isaiah viii. 20.

formers afforded too much ground for perversion. But is there any of this obscurity in the Westminster Confession, and Larger and Shorter Catechisms? They are too decided for the Reformers of the present day, and therefore, with anxious care, they are kept in the back ground. These, however, *are* our standards, and we believe them to be according to the word of God. Two extracts from them will be sufficient to show, that on the subject of assurance they are at irreconcilable variance with your system. Speaking of assurance, they say: "This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God; which spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to *the essence of faith*, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it; yet, being enabled by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he *may*, without extraordinary revelation, *in the right use of ordinary means*, attain thereunto."*

"Can true believers be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and that they shall persevere therein unto salvation? Such as truly believe in Christ, and endeavour to walk in all good conscience before him, *may*, without extraordinary revelation, by faith grounded upon the truth of God's promises, and by the Spirit's enabling them to *discern in themselves those graces to which the promises of life are made*, and bearing witness with their spirits that they are the children of God, be infallibly assured that they are in the estate of grace, and shall persevere therein unto salvation."

* Confession of Faith, chap. xviii.

“Are all true believers at all times assured of their present being in a state of grace, and that they shall be saved? Assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith, true believers may wait long before they obtain it; and, after the enjoyment thereof may have it weakened and intermitted, through manifold distempers, sins, temptations, and desertions; yet they are never left without such a presence or support of the Spirit of God as keeps them from sinking into utter despair.”*

I had written thus far when Dr. Burns’s “Reply to the Lay Member of the Church of Scotland” was handed in to me. It is conclusive†—and it is but doing justice to the Doctor, and more to my argument, simply to refer to the work itself. I will take the liberty, however, of transcribing one or two sentences. The following is excellent: “In all your tracts on the subject of the reformed opinions, you proceed on a principle in which I do not acquiesce. You look to the *very earliest* Reformers from Popery, as the most accurate and consistent expounders of Christian Theology. I

* Larger Catechism, questions 80 and 81.

† The Doctor is *an excellent shot*, an able engineer, a first-rate artillery-man, and we apprehend danger in some of his future campaigns, for he seems to think he is only armed with a pop-gun.—“Who,” he asks, “would think of taking great guns to kill butterflies?” So says the Irish song:

“A gun’s too big for killing flies.”

The Doctor’s *calibre*, however, though of small size, is doing tremendous execution, and is directed by a marksman of unerring aim. Dear Sir, think before you fire, and spare, oh! spare at least the fluttering dames.

From the Doctor’s allusion to the case of Elijah in showing that mirth is not incompatible with seriousness, we hope he intends to follow the prophet only in his sport, and not to lay violent hands on a single priest, till by authorised laws he is condemned as a servant of Baal, and a polluter of “the religion of the land;” and having a legal sentence pronounced, all the people will say, Amen.

do not look upon them at all in that light. Inestimable are the advantages we owe to the Luthers, the Cranmers, the Riddleys, the Latimers, the Hamiltons, the Beacons,* of the reforming age; but their services to the faith consisted rather in acting and suffering for its sake. Lately rescued from the darkness of Popery, and called into the field of incessant conflict for their liberties and their lives, they had not the same advantages which their successors enjoyed for the careful investigation of the system of divine truth. I notice this, not with the most distant view of conceding a single point to you, but merely to account for the vague and undefined views which their writings do occasionally exhibit, compared with the clear, and accurate, and systematic statements of their immediate successors." † "But it is quite a mistake to suppose that the early Reformers held the doctrine of assurance of personal salvation as *essential* to faith. The doctrine which they opposed was the '*general and doubtful faith*' of the church of Rome, and this '*general and doubtful faith*' was opposed, not to assurance of *personal salvation*, but to *confident reliance* or *fiducial trust* in the merits and mediation of the Saviour. In opposition to the vague and unscriptural notions of the Papists, the Reformers held that faith implied not merely *an assent of the understanding to the truth*, but a *particular dependence* or *trusting* in Christ Jesus as the *only* and *infallible* Saviour. The distinction must be clearly recognised between *assurance of faith* in the *testimony of God* as to the free salvation of the gospel, and the *assurance of sense* regarding our salvation. That this distinction was known and recognised in the reforming age, will appear from the quotations which follow. ‡" The quotations, accordingly, which the Doctor has made from the writings of the "Reformers and Martyrs," are most decisive, and prove beyond contradiction that the assurance of personal salvation as *essential* to faith, formed

* Quere, *Beacons*?

† Page 6.

‡ Page 8.

no part of their creed. It is unnecessary here to transcribe any of these quotations ; I shall only remark, that they contain a triumphant refutation of the opinions of your Lay friend, and from a "*Light from a cloud of Witnesses,*" more refulgent than any that he could display in a thousand "*Catechists.*"

OBEDIENCE AND THE OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT.

ADAM being created in the image of God, in his moral constitution resembled his Creator. At the fall he lost this spiritual likeness, and became deformed and miserable. The plan of recovery devised by God was intended not only to deliver man from the consequences of sin, but also from its dominion. Christ died not only to procure for man deliverance from the curse of the law, but to make him meet for heaven. By the death of Christ there is secured for the believer, justifying and sanctifying grace. By the one he is delivered from punishment, and by the other he acquires a relish for holiness. These two parts of the work of redemption are so closely connected, that sanctification is a necessary consequence of justification; but still they are parts of a whole, distinctly marked out by peculiar qualities. In the exercise of faith the believer receives the pardon of his sins, which is included in justification: and in the exercise of the same faith he becomes meet for the inheritance of the saints in bliss, which constitutes his sanctification. Justification is an act, a thing done at once; sanctification is a work, progressive in its nature. The one is recorded in heaven; the other flourishes on earth, and bears fruit for immortality. Our justification is an act hid in the deep counsels of God, and its existence can be proved only by its

immediate consequence—a change in the character. The extent of this change, however, is only partial, not complete. It does not make a man sinless, but it gives a predominance in the mind for holiness, which gradually increasing, settles at length into a fixed and ruling principle. Were this change complete, every genuine believer would be perfect as Adam was in innocence, and glorified saints are in heaven. This, however, in the nature of things, cannot take place in this imperfect state. Sanctification never gives to the believer an exact resemblance to Adam in innocence, but a growing likeness, and the nearer this resemblance is, the more successfully is he enabled to resist temptation. Faith only purifies the heart partially, and leaves so much of the remains of indwelling sin, as makes the best of men wish to be delivered “from the body of this death.”

In the lively exercise of faith, when the believer's moral sky is serene, and no cloud intervenes between him and his heavenly Father, he contemplates God enthroned in majesty, smiling on him with ineffable delight, and welcoming him, through the intercession of his elder brother, to the realms of bliss. The index of his mind is directed towards *set fair*, and like the sun rejoicing in his course through a cloudless sky, he moves along, beautiful in his renewed nature, and an object of delight to every beholder. His faith beginning to waver, a darkness gathers round his mind, his moral atmosphere loses its purity, and God appears more severe and unrelenting in character, with less of the tenderness of a forgiving father. The index of his mind points to *change*, and following perhaps the suggestions of an evil heart excited by Satan, he thinks, speaks, and acts so, that when conscience, aroused by the Spirit, recalls him from error to duty, in the bitterness of genuine repentance, he wishes in the anguish of his mind, that his head were waters, and his eyes rivers of tears, that he might weep day and night for the sins he has committed. The faith of the believer lulled to rest by the workings of his own heart, or by the suggestions of the evil one, conscience ceases to

alarm, the presence of God is overlooked, and the unguarded believer, surprised with besetting sins, in an evil hour is made a willing captive to Satan. The index of his mind in this crisis points to *stormy*. Conscience condemns—the law threatens—Satan triumphs—justice, stern and unrelenting, unsheathes her sword. The offender enveloped in darkness, Hope languishes—Despair gathers strength—and Satan, riding on the storm, prepares to secure his victim. Faith languid, is strengthened by repentance, and breathes forth the prayer, “Lord, save me, else I perish.” The assistance of heaven invoked, the storm is changed into a calm. Satan is rebuked, and he who was afflicted and tossed with tempests, enjoys the protection of him who ruleth in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.

In the conduct of the best of men what do we see? The effect of two opposing principles. One indeed generally prevailing, and operating in the fruits of righteousness; but the other occasionally usurping dominion, and causing the fixed habit of the mind to give way to the seductive principles implanted by the evil one.

The Christian is perhaps possessed of a temper naturally keen, and shrinkingly alive to every circumstance which affects his reputation; and in an unguarded moment, when his temper has been ruffled, and his feelings wounded by some malicious insinuation, marked neglect, or unprovoked insult, he yields to his natural impetuosity, and in the feverish agitation of his mind, aroused to indignation, breaks through the restraints of his religion, and speaks unadvisedly with his lips. Ah! can this be a disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus? Has this heart, now boiling with passion, never felt the calming influence of genuine Christianity? Have these features, now distorted with anger, never relaxed under the mild influence of the sun of righteousness? Have those lips which now quiver with rage, never embodied the feelings of a heart designed to glorify God, and do

good to men? Yes—a believer may act thus from sudden temptation, but though he fall, he will not be utterly cast down. The affectionate voice of his Saviour calling to him, “Return, return, O Shulamite, that we may look upon thee,” will remind him whence he has fallen, and with the candour of a sorrowing, yet rejoicing penitent, he will say, “What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies.”

How different frequently are the resolutions and actions even of a true Christian. To will is present, but how to perform that which is good, he finds not. In his morning devotions, perhaps in thought soaring above this cloudy region, and receiving by faith a glimpse of the promised land; or ever he is aware, his soul is made like the chariots of Aminadab. How delightful at such a time his frame of mind; how ardent his spiritual effusions; and how determined his resolutions, when the flame of devotion burns within his breast, and the realities of eternity engross his attention. Accompany him into the world, and see him placed under circumstances which employ all the energies of his mind, and brought into contact, from unavoidable causes, with the irreligious and the profane. Fortified as he appeared when he entered society, and watchful as he seemed to be to retain his integrity, the somniferous atmosphere by which he is surrounded, sometimes lulls his better principles to rest, and the natural inclinations of his heart, awakened to activity by the enemy of souls, make him listen perhaps with indifference, at least without marked disapprobation, to the frivolity of the trifling, the unhallowed tale of the worldling, and expressions bordering on the profane. But when he has escaped from this demoralising atmosphere, will his lethargy remain? Ah! no—the voice of his Saviour calling upon him to return, will awaken him to a sense of duty, and feeling the keen pangs of remorse for past misconduct, in his evening devotions he will confess his sin, and exclaim in the language of humility and peni-

tence; "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

The remaining power of indwelling sin, however, is experienced more by the believer in the internal movements of his heart, than exhibited to others in his walk and conversation. It requires not the excitement of a world lying in wickedness to set in operation the remains of sin within his breast. The heart itself is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, and our spiritual adversary can assail as easily in solitude, as in the busy haunts of society. Within the believer's breast occasionally the risings of spiritual pride may cause a momentary disrelish to the humility which the gospel inculcates. His appetites excited, may urge to gratification. The passions inflamed, may torture the soul with imaginary evils. The affections may be apathised by the festerings of pride, the lowerings of jealousy, and the dark broodings of suspicion. The heart, generally glowing with divine love, may have its flame diverted to feed the less exalted passions of the soul.

Could the heart of the very best of men be laid open for inspection for a few days, or even a few hours, and its revolving thoughts be clearly discerned, much remaining depravity would appear amid the traits of moral loveliness. Where is the Christian who has not occasionally had uncharitable thoughts of his neighbour, felt the excitement of passion, indulged ungrateful feelings towards God, been forgetful of his requirements, and experienced in many instances a distaste for his service? Search the annals of time from Adam's fall to this passing moment, and the history of every believer will prove, that the heart, even under a course of sanctification, is the seat of contending principles. It is from this circumstance that those who, from their walk and conversation, appear to be perfect men in Christ Jesus, when they contrast the state of their hearts with the spirituality of God's law, acknowledge themselves to be the chief of sinners. Yes, it was this consideration which made the

almost perfect Paul exclaim, and makes every sincere believer re-echo his sentiments: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Can men, therefore, under the influence of such opposing principles, be travelling onwards from the Jerusalem below to the Zion above? Yes, such conflicting principles are in operation in the believer's mind, but those of the new man are attaining to a fixed habit, and guard the citadel of the heart from the efforts of the old man, waxing feebler day by day.

When the believer has been surprised by some besetting sin, the voice of the Saviour reaching his heart, arouses his attention, and allures him to consideration, and with ingenuous frankness he confesses the state of his mind, and rejoices in the prospect of a complete and speedy triumph.—While he laments the power of indwelling sin, his sorrow does not overcome his mind. It is not the sorrow of a mind dreading punishment for guilt, but the tender movements of a heart heaving its regrets for offending a beloved parent. His sighs are not the aspirations of despair, but the meltings of filial love. His tears are not the wailings of bereavement, but the effect of feelings excited for want of due affection to a parent, tender in pity, and willing to forgive.

As the believer approaches the verge of time, his mind almost spiritualised for eternity, in anticipating the complete triumph of holiness over sin, even on this side the grave, his soul is inflamed with the love of the glorified saints.—Wrapt in heavenly extacy, the old man, the lusts which war against the soul, are overcome, and in the triumph of faith he expires in the arms of victory, saying, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

You suppose that love is the sole principle of obedience. "The law," you say, "can only be obeyed by those who

know that God loves them, and has washed out their sins in the blood of the Lamb. None else can obey it,—and therefore this proclamation of full and free forgiveness, so far from removing the motives of true obedience, contains the only motives which can produce true obedience.”* In this statement you confound cause and effect. Love is not the principle of obedience; it is the effect of a principle, and is no more a principle than other effects arising from the same primary principle which produces obedience. Faith is not only the first act of the renewed soul, but is also the sole principle of action in the believer’s breast. “Without faith it is impossible to please God,” because without it the very principle is wanting which gives to actions their value.—Love does not operate through faith, but faith works by love. And in the nature of things it cannot be otherwise. Love never can be considered a primary principle. It must be preceded by some other principle, before its existence can be known or felt. “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, &c.”† “The end of the commandment is charity, † out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, *and of faith unfeigned.*”‡ According to my faith, so must be my affections. If I believe a man to be wicked, I cannot love him, if I hate wickedness. If I believe a man to be good—if I love what is good, I must have towards him the feelings of complacency. It is the same with regard to God. The faith implanted in the believer’s breast by the Spirit is not love, but it is *the cause of love.* Love is neither the principle of obedience, nor obedience itself, but an effect of faith, which, like other effects produced by the same principle, necessarily forms a part of the Christian character.

* Introd. Essay, &c. page liii. † Eph. iii. 17.

‡ ἀγάπη the same word which is elsewhere translated love.

|| 1 Tim. i. 5.

“God exhorts men,” you say, “to obedience, just on this very ground, that God in Christ hath forgiven them;” * and “the exhortations to practical duties, addressed in the epistles to Christians, are all founded on the knowledge that their old sins were forgiven them.” † The passages to which you refer in order to establish this point, are Colossians iii. 12. 13. “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye;”—Ephesians iv. 32. “And be ye kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake, hath forgiven you;”—2 Peter i. 9. “He that lacketh these things (the Christian graces mentioned in the preceding verses) is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”—With regard to the two first of these passages you grant that they are addressed to believers, and therefore do not support the position that all are pardoned. The inference, however, which you deduce from them is, “that no man is a believer who does not know that his sins are forgiven.” Allowing that the believers to whom these exhortations were addressed, knew that *their* sins were forgiven, how did they attain this knowledge?—Not by any direct special revelation from God, but by the same evidences by which the saints to whom John writes knew that they had “passed from death to life.” By perusing his first epistle you will find that these evidences were, that *they kept the commandments of God; imitated the example of Christ; loved the brethren as bearing the image of God; had overcome the prince of darkness; were weaned from the world; lived in no known sin; made it their habitual study to do those things which were pleasing in the sight of God; and in short, were conscious of the sanctifying influences of the*

* Introd. Essay, &c. page liii. † Do. page xliv.

Holy Spirit which dwelt in them, exhibited in their walk and conversation. These were evidences by which they could not possibly be deceived, and from which they had good grounds to appropriate to themselves God's pardoning love. "Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."* But it may be asked, why does the Apostle exhort the believing Colossians to obedience, on the ground that God had forgiven them, when it was only by their obedience that they could know they had been forgiven? I answer, that the obedience of a believer is never perfect in this life, but advances by progressive stages, and though his past obedience be the evidence by which he attains a knowledge of his forgiveness, this knowledge of forgiveness, when attained, is a powerful incentive to encreased diligence in the Christian life. By perusing the preceding part of the chapter from which the exhortation to the Colossians is taken, you will find that they had already made great attainments in Christian graces; they had laid aside "anger, wrath, blasphemy, and filthy communication"—they had "put off the old man with his deeds, and had put on the new man;" and having by these means, obtained a knowledge of their forgiveness, this forgiveness is consistently urged as an additional motive for their advancement in holiness, by adding to their previous attainments the Christian graces enumerated in the 12th, 13th, and 14th verses.

In the passage from Peter, you entirely mistake the Apostle's meaning. The expression, "purged from their old sins," refers not to the actual pardon of these sins, but to the emblematical purification from former sins, in the ordinance of baptism. The persons to whom the Apostle alludes, on their entering into the church by this ordinance, had virtually vowed to put away their former sins, and to

* 1 John ii. 3. 4.

walk worthy of the gospel which they professed to believe, but as they lacked the graces enumerated in the 5th, 6th, and 7th verses, they had practically forgot the obligation under which they had come, to lead a new life; and were therefore merely nominal Christians, who had been admitted into the church by baptism, and retained the form of godliness, but denied its power, remaining wilfully blind—shutting their eyes against the spiritual requirements of the gospel.”* In the previous verses, the Apostle, addressing believers, exhorts them to add to their faith the different graces of the Christian character; and having in the 9th verse alluded to the state of these nominal professors, in the 10th he resumes his exhortation: “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure;” on which passage the Rev. Dr. Barr, in an elegant and conclusive sermon, entitled “The Peace of Believing distinguished from Antinomian Assurance,” judiciously remarks,—“He refers not to the act but the evidence of their election, and exhorts them to have that, which, from eternity, had been made sure in the Divine purpose, made sure also to themselves by a clear and undoubted manifestation.”

In the case of the woman who washed our Saviour's feet with her tears, you say that “we have the proof that forgiveness must precede belief, *for it is the very thing believed*; and that salvation must follow belief, for salvation is nothing else than the love which is produced by the knowledge of God's forgiving love already bestowed.”† The fallacy of this may be shown by a single question. Did not the woman *love* independently of the *act of forgiveness*, and had she not proved her love by her actions before she was assured of personal forgiveness? You have grossly mistaken this case, and consequently your inferences from it are erroneous.

* See Macknight's paraphrase of the passage. † Page xliii.

“When our Lord,” you remark, “says to the woman taken in adultery, ‘Go and sin no more,’ he grounds the admonition on that word of life, ‘neither do I condemn thee,’ and lest the woman herself, or any others, should suppose that this word had any exclusive application to her more than to others, he immediately adds, ‘I am the light of the world,’—not of this woman only, John, viii. 11—12. These two verses ought not to be separated.”* You certainly have not considered the context, or you never would have attempted to fix such a meaning on this passage. The woman’s accusers came tempting our Lord, and tempting him to what? To give judgment in a legal case. If he had spoken contrary to the law, they would have condemned him as an opposer of that law; if he had judged her agreeably to the law, they would have accused him of setting himself up as a judge, and assuming authority to which they supposed he had no claim. Jesus, perceiving their malice, wisely defeats their intention. He did not assume the office of a temporal judge, and therefore did not condemn the woman; and as those who accused her should have proved her guilt, he left her to be judged by constituted authority, and gave her the salutary admonition, “Go and sin no more.” Besides, how did you find that “he immediately added, ‘I am the light of the world;’ and what authority have you for saying that “these two verses *ought not to be separated?*” We are not told how long it was after the woman retired that Jesus said, “I am the light of the world;” but it would be no easy matter for you to prove that the one saying has any connection with the other; at least the “two verses” are as much “*separated*” in idea as any two verses in the Scriptures.

Granting that love is the principle of obedience, what is the meaning of the remark,—“True obedience is love?” If they are so distinct that the one is the cause of the other,

how can they be the same? Or if so, it may as properly be said, that *true obedience is the principle of love*. But this is not all;—true obedience, according to you, is not only the same as love, but “true obedience, which is love, is also salvation.”† Salvation then, is love or obedience, for according to your theory, “obedience is the ultimate blessing.”* This jumble of terms and ideas is worse than contradiction; it leads to doctrines of the most dangerous tendency. Your adherents possess love as a principle of obedience, and as love and obedience are the same, they are obedient, and as obedience is the ultimate blessing, they are already in the enjoyment of the reward of their labour, and have received the salvation of their souls. With the exception of place, they are the same as the redeemed family in heaven. Principles of this kind must inevitably lead to the most extravagant enthusiasm. They contain the elements of the wildest excesses in religion.

The results of your system, however, are modified according to the temper, circumstances, and pursuits, of your adherents, and hence its more prominent features are self-righteousness, spiritual pride, vanity, want of charity, and enthusiasm. You attribute self-righteousness to our system, and this insinuation from you is almost a direct proof that it is necessarily connected with your own. The maxims of men are generally the result of experience, and since you are so anxious to stigmatise our system as self-righteous, this anxiety may be caused by the secret conviction that a self-righteous spirit is the necessary result of your own system. If you have not this conviction, your charge must arise from a blind attachment to your own system, the pervading spirit of which is self-righteousness. Our system leaves the Christian as the Bible authorises, without any righteousness of his own—strips him of every fancied attainment, and, seating him at the foot of the cross, shows him

* Introd. Essay, &c. page lvii. † Ditto page lvi.

Christ the righteous fulfilling all righteousness, and by this righteousness being imputed to him, he is made acceptable in the sight of God. On your system, he simply accepts of pardon, and by this act, becomes possessed of a righteousness which secures for him the favour of God. By simply contrasting the effects of the two systems, and the state of the mind when faith is in operation, it will appear, that with the one system self-righteousness has no connection, while from the other it flows as a necessary consequence. The question is frequently put by your adherents to pious persons who differ from them in opinion: "What would be the state of your mind if you knew that this night your soul would be required of you?" To this I answer, that a believer in such a case is resigned to the will of his heavenly Father, and having confidence in God that he will keep that which he has committed to his trust, he will cast all his cares on him, and await the approach of death with calm composure, humble confidence, and triumphant hope. One of your adherents, in the same circumstances, will have another feeling, and *it may be the only feeling*. He knows that by an act of his mind he has embraced pardon and secured eternal happiness, and he trusts to the assurance thus acquired. But is not this self-righteousness? Is it not grounding his confidence on an act of his own mind?

According to the cause of pride and its connecting circumstances, are its effects on the character. Self-estimation is its originating cause, and if it influences a person of warm passions and unpolished manners, he will, if opposed, become insolent and rude. A man of ardour, but of careful mental training, concealing in his own breast the effects of his disappointment, is silent and dignified in his general deportment, but in retirement, by brooding over imaginary evils, they assume a mighty importance, and hence his more immediate friends are troubled with his fickleness, and the occasional out-breakings of morbid sensibility, peevishness, and high-wrought delicacy of sentiment and action. Spiritual pride is necessarily connected with self-righteousness,

and assumes a form which, to those who are ignorant of the philosophy of the mind, is very captivating, but which, traced to its legitimate source, is of all kinds of pride the most detestable and dangerous. It is the actings of a puny mortal, assuming airs before the Almighty. The reason why it cannot easily be detected, is, that in certain minds of luxuriant fancy it affects an apparent humility. There is a pride of sentiment, with lowliness of expression—a self-complacency, with apparent anxiety for another's welfare. Spiritual pride produces the utmost internal importance, self-complacency, and independence; and instead of causing a man to keep at a sullen distance, it makes him stoop to others to feed his pride. He has a party to support, and in his exertions for that purpose, he is maintaining his individual superiority, and by conquests indulging a favourite feeling. There is something more than grand in the idea of being the favourite of heaven, and spiritual pride assumes the appearance of vanity, for if its possessor is wrong, he cannot bear to be alone, but loves the society of others to keep him in countenance, and if right, pride is gratified to the full in communicating any thing of importance. These are its genuine fruits, however, only when unopposed. Religious pride is more consequential than any other modification of this quality of mind, and if unsuccessful in gaining a friend, it is the most pernicious in its effects. It does not lead to insolence as in the rude proud man, nor to feverish sensibility as in the man of refinement, but cuts asunder the ties of friendship, and locks the breast against kindly sympathies. I have seen converts of a few weeks standing, complacently attempting to teach reverend Fathers the ways of God to man, and pouting with contempt at the lessons of wisdom which dropped from their lips. Pride mantling in the heart, was suppressed for the success of a party, so that the countenance spoke little of what was passing within; and returning to the nourishment of self-importance, the tongue refused to do its office—the head was raised—the lips were compressed—the eyes rolled upward,

and an attentive observer easily discerned that the inward man was feeding on pride, while there was a struggle to make the outward man imitate the actions of humility.

The same causes do not always produce the same effects. Some men cannot conceal their attainments, whether real or fancied, but court the observation of the world. Religious vanity thirsts for display, and in proportion to the degree of vanity which the person possesses, will be his desire to make known his attainments, and his obtrusive bustling and restlessness to excite observation and gain applause. Desire for the applause of others is the very essence of vanity. Vanity, the darling *virtue* of the weak-minded female, has made that piety obtrusive, which should have shone in the retirement of domestic life. The wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove have been forgot by those *over-much-righteous* ladies, who, in the bustle of their little spirits, have undertaken to explain what they do not comprehend, and that in a manner destructive to female modesty, and calculated rather to strengthen prejudice, than to open the heart to religious instruction.

Misguided enthusiasm is always imprudent. The imagination magnifies every object, and the means employed are so much out of the usual course, that the end attempted is lost. The entrance of the heart is not to be gained by a sudden sally; but by wisely directed and regular proceedings—catching as with guile—watching circumstances—seizing opportunities—and acting, not from the impulse of mere feeling, but from the motive of another's welfare. Christ is often wounded in the house of his friends, by the foolish impetuosity of imprudent zeal. Times and seasons must be carefully watched, in order to gain access to the heart, and frequently much may be done by the impressive eloquence of silence. The drunkard is not to be reproved in the midst of his cups, nor the man of passion when excited to madness. Profanity and wantonness may often be silently, yet most successfully checked, without a direct insult. The language of heaven is not to drop from the lips

to afford merriment by contrast, or to furnish matter for the song of the profane.' In this world there are three distinct classes of individuals who require accommodation ;—the children of the evil one, the children of the world, and the children of light. When men are brought into contact with each other on matters of business, an authorised language is adopted, and worldly affairs are transacted in civility. That man must not only be shockingly profane, but likewise uncivil, who wounds the feelings of an acknowledged Christian by using in his presence the language of impiety ; and that Christian is exceedingly imprudent, who casts his pearls before swine. If the Christian is insulted, he will not betray his Master's cause by any undue concession, but remaining firm to his principles, he will set his face as a flint, and not be ashamed. If he casts his pearls before swine, are not the wicked acting legitimately in the service of *their* master, when they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend those who imprudently excited their rage ? The children of the evil one, among their own associates, will breathe freely ; and with hearts set on fire by hell, will unburden the workings of their depravity. The worldling, in his connection with time, will never be at a loss to find opportunity for the current of his thoughts to be embodied in language agreeable to his feelings. Is the Christian alone amid this busy intercourse of the sons of men ? " Not slothful in business," but providing for his own, the world has claims upon him which his religion teaches him to recognise, and which if he would disregard, he must needs go out of the world. Being at the same time " fervent in spirit," he has another set of feelings to indulge ; and these find ample gratification in the sweet counsel which he takes with those who, like himself, are travelling Zionward. Their spirits breathing divine love, with what rapture do they communicate to each other what God has done for their souls, and anticipating eternity, how do their hearts burn within them, as they animate, encourage, and support each other in their pilgrimage to another and a better world.

But are Christians never to give vent to their feelings except in the company of each other? Combining the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove, there is a time to be chosen, and a manner to be employed in order to gain their end. Affliction may melt to softness the obdurate heart, and open the unwilling ear to instruction, and then "a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Around the whole of a Christian's deportment there is a native simplicity, an indescribable something, which sheds over him a moral beauty, not only attractive but winning. His light so shines around him in his good works, that others are by his example led to glorify his Father who is in heaven.

Vanity is fond of display, and courts observation. Enthusiasm never wants opportunity, and in the ardour of misguided zeal, incurs enmity, and provokes contempt. The genuine Christian becomes all things to all men, that he may gain some; and in bearing all things, the spirit of Christianity is never modified to the wickedness of the world; but things indifferent are laid aside, and in these there is a praise-worthy assimilation, which begets confidence, and makes no enemies, and which, by slow degrees, may add another name to the roll of life. Is there no piety but in ostentatious *mannerism*? Is the language of Scripture to be employed in our every-day business, and to be made the vehicle of settling accounts and making purchases? Is Christianity so very obtrusive in its nature, that the native modesty of ladies is to be laid aside, and they are to expose themselves to the idle gaze of the un-

* The *cant* used by many of your adherents is a burlesque on religion, and to a pious mind truly revolting. It reminds me of the language employed by the Puritans in the time of Cromwell. You will remember that when the Protector sent Colonel White with a band of soldiers to disperse honest Mr. Praise-God Barebones' Parliament, the Colonel, on entering the house, asked the members what they

thinking, and the profane sallies of the irreligious; and vend Christianity as in a public market? Are a few dogmas the tests of religion; and is the unlettered dame, with more assurance than sense, to condemn the piety of our land,—with unblushing countenance to teach our Doctors in Divinity—and with the feelings of a fiend to hurl her anathemas around, and make the way to heaven so narrow that all but the *Selecti* must crowd along to the chambers of death? Hope will soon be realised, and faith be vision, but charity, descending from above, expanding and elevating the heart, is a virtue unknown to those who would exclude from heaven all who do not embrace their peculiar dogmas.

Pride and vanity naturally lead to want of charity. A proud man, if unsuccessful in the world, retires in sullen importance within his own mind, and condemns the world as ignorant in not being able to appreciate his merits. Comparing himself with himself, and drawing a line of distinction between himself and others, he gratifies his pride in the distant view of a world, which he reckons beneath his notice. The vain man, not successful in attracting notice, calumniates those from whom he expected reverence, esteem, and applause. In proportion to the degree of his vanity will be his activity in detraction; and the flattering and cajoling of his supple tongue will be exchanged for the low growl of hatred and contempt. In religion his detraction will end in whining, and if he is either enthusiastic or hypocritical, with the greater art will he cover his intentions, and while in his heart there are drawn swords, more smooth than butter may be his words. He will condemn *from very kindness*, and even his “*harsh and presumptuous sayings*” he will represent as the offspring of charity. Those

were doing there. “We are seeking the Lord,” answered the Speaker. “Then,” retorted the officer, “you may go elsewhere, for to my certain knowledge, the Lord has not been here these many years.” Things must have their established names, and the parliament was certainly met for the purpose of discussing politics.

who have not the knowledge that every man is loved and forgiven, have not eternal life, and their obedience is quite different from the obedience produced by love. This is your decision, and it has not even a sprinkling of charity, but contains one fell sweep of condemnation against the piety of a land, proverbial over the world for vital godliness, and against the many thousands of our pious Christians. "Judge not, that ye be not judged." The Lord will reveal it in due*

* This eulogium must be understood only in a comparative sense. Every true Christian has cause bitterly to lament the prevailing indifference to vital piety, even in a land far more evangelised than any other country on the face of the globe. The character of the present age is not polluted by the stain of persecution, darkened by bigotry, nor disgraced by avowed infidelity. At present many distinguished virtues are more generally diffused, and cultivated in a higher degree, than perhaps in any former age of Christianity; but at the same time it must be acknowledged that the times in which we live are disgraced by vices, which, though not of the darkest shade, from their general diffusion have a deadening effect upon true godliness. In no age of the Church did practical infidelity so much prevail among the professors of Christianity as it does at present. Our adversary the Devil walking about, accommodates his temptations to the existing circumstances of society, and through the influence of the men of the world, and the heedless indifference of Christian professors, only so much of the Christianity of the Bible is adopted as harmonises with the prevailing taste of society. There seems to be a mutual accommodation between the men of the world and too many who call themselves Christians, and, amalgamated into one earthly mass, the duties which should distinguish the Christian as having come out of the world are laid aside, or so divested of their peculiarities, that Christianity with many, is not so much an actuating principle, as a mere name. Our worthy forefathers might be too unbending in sentiment, and severe in manners, but they were men of genuine integrity, and not much contaminated with the maxims and customs of a world lying in wickedness. We wish their degenerate sons had more of their spirit. As we would not, however, mock a person who was shivering under the ague, by

time. Their witness is on high, and their record in the book of God's remembrance; and with their eye fixed on Zion as their eternal home, they cast not towards you and your adherents even an upbraiding look, but with their breasts heaving with pity, and their hearts melted into tenderness, their aspirations ascend to Heaven in the words of their Lord and Master: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

It makes the heart bleed to see the initiated of yesterday dealing out their crude notions and absurd contradictions to men of experience;—with a low whisper, a suppressed sigh, the eye turned up, and a little member set on fire by false love, blessing themselves and condemning the spiritual state of others;—rejoicing in their escape to Zoar, and looking back on the world—ay, the very saints—the excellent—the salt of the earth, as the population of Sodom and Gomorrah—and Heaven darkening over them, and fire and brimstone about to descend on Ministers and congregations, selfish and self-righteous—ignorant of the gospel of Jesus Christ—dreaming on in a false obedience—and "trampling under foot the Son of God, and all that is contained in his incarnation, and death, and resurrection."

It is our duty to "be zealously affected in a good cause," but our zeal must be according to knowledge. If the imagination is strong, and the judgement weak, we will be more under the power of feeling, than the influence of the judgement. Fancying ourselves in possession of something valuable which others have not attained, an impulse is given to the mind fitted to produce intensity of action. The ex-

administering to him a draught which would bring upon him a burning fever; nor attempt to counteract the effects of cold upon one whose limbs were benumbed, by casting him into a furnace;—so while we would rejoice to see the lukewarmness of professing Christians removed, we would at the same time exhort them to avoid such extravagant excitements as may end in the wild excesses of enthusiasm, or the mad ravings of fanaticism.

travagance of our joy, like that of one who has found a hid treasure, must be known throughout the neighbourhood.—If our supposed discoveries are connected with religion, the mind having here ample space, riots in its own creations, and selecting from the Bible what is in accordance with its own feelings, these feelings overpower the understanding, and settle in enthusiasm, which has more or less activity, according to the exciting circumstances, and the vivid conception of the imagination. Persons of this description, fancying themselves so much more enlightened than others, the pride of party zeal urges them forward;—the vanity of ostentation—a spirit which thinks evil of the state of other Christians—the pleasure of obtaining a great reward, even without a struggle—and of overturning a system venerable for its antiquity, are some of the causes of running to and fro—of the closeting of friends—the watchwords of the initiated—the Saturday's escape to GOSHEN*—the forgetful-

* The parishes of Row and Rosneath are, I understand, so called by the initiated. If by this it is meant that these *favoured* spots are more fertile than the rest of our land, we need only cast a glance at their heath-covered hills to be convinced of the contrary. I apprehend, however, that by the name they wish to insinuate that the banks of the Gareloch alone enjoy light, while the rest of our *devoted* country is immersed in darkness. As to natural light, the Sun shines as bright on Greenock as on Fernicarry, and when the prophetess of *Goshen* comes across, (not *walks* across, as report would have it, even without Kent's machine,) she will probably be surprised to find that *we Egyptians* have light in our dwellings, and if she has any *faith* in our assertions, we can assure her that we have not even *felt* the darkness, except when the Sun is beneath the horizon. As to its spiritual application, it is begging the question, for we each think that we enjoy the rays of the Sun of Righteousness arising with healing under his wings, and therefore it is mutually applicable. In one point at least the nomenclature is incorrect, for leaving place out of the question, it is certain that we are like the Israelites of old, busied in our lawful occupations, while the would-be Goshenites are living at ease, enjoying the fruits of our industry, and preparing new

ness of necessary duties—the all-absorbing anxiety about pardon, that Deity of Gareloch—the shout and song of joy,—till Christianity loses its distinguishing features, and, new-modelled by enthusiasm, furnishes matter for the jeer of the licentious, and the scoffs of the irreligious.

There is indeed a certain kind of enthusiasm in religion, which it is not only wrong to censure, but which every disciple of Jesus ought to possess. If we understand the term in its usual accommodated sense when applied to the state of the mind with regard to human affairs, as signifying an elevation of affection, an earnest devotedness to the duties in which we are engaged, this feeling will, in a greater or less degree, have a place in the breast of every child of God.—It is this which gives the believer that glow of affection towards his heavenly Father, that ardour and devotedness in his Master's cause, without which religion is at best but “the cold barren offspring of speculation.”

Principles may be avowed when the effects resulting from them cannot be perceived, and when they are embodied in action, they may produce effects which could not have been anticipated. John Agricola was a man of the most amiable character, and could refer his opponents to his walk and conversation, as a practical refutation of the errors attached to his system. His principles, however, when legitimately acted on, ended in the wildest excesses of fanaticism; and in the conduct of the Anabaptists of Germany, Antinomianism modified by the ravings of fanaticism, countenanced the most shocking perversion of moral energy, and urging its votaries to acts of diabolical cruelty, rendered them the pests of society, and made their extirpation necessary as the only means of putting an end to their ravages. The same principles produce enthusiasm and fanaticism, but these

modes of oppression, by threatening us with another volume of *Memoirs*. They have already been plentifully supplied with our *bricks*, and have not even furnished us with *straw*. Cruel task-masters! to say we are idle; when by our activity they are enabled to “*be careful for nothing*.”

principles may be modified by circumstances, or so combined with other feelings, that in their operation they may lead to enthusiasm, but not to fanaticism. Fanaticism is properly only a higher degree of enthusiasm, but the principles embraced may be so modified, that they will not produce fanaticism, but end only in enthusiasm. This is exactly the tendency of your system. It is a combination of principles, the natural effect of which is not, like simple Antinomianism abused, to lead to fanaticism; but it leads directly to enthusiasm.

Enthusiasm and mysticism are so closely connected, that the existence of the one generally produces the other.—There is a something felt which cannot be expressed, and the enthusiast, breathing in an atmosphere of his own, his ideas and language are peculiar. Wrapt in the mantle of mysticism, he is partly invisible, and partly unintelligible. The creature of silent contemplation, he roams at large in creations of his own fancy, and none can comprehend his sayings and doings but the initiated. This is in some degree the case with your adherents. Our minds are too gross to comprehend their wire-drawn speculations, and though we contradict, by express declarations of Scripture, their extravagant assertions, still they pertinaciously adhere to their system. Their statements have been examined, and from their own mouths they have been condemned, but still they say that no opponent understands their system. This is of itself sufficient to condemn it, for if words can express their ideas, we have their own words, and the opinions expressed by these words are known, and have been refuted. If words cannot express their ideas, or if these ideas are unintelligible, how do they comprehend them themselves? And if the whole is unintelligible, it is *mysticism mystified*, and ignorance attempting to screen itself from exposure.

Hypocrisy, in its genuine state, is the offspring of cunning;—an object is sought, an end is desired. The essence of hypocrisy lies in ostentation and deceit. The hypocrite has one person which is natural, and another which is arti-

ficial ;—the one he conceals—the other he assumes in order to gain a fair shew in the flesh. Every person who pretends to have more than he can possibly possess, or to be what in the nature of things he cannot be, is an enthusiastic hypocrite.

Hypocrisy differs widely in its object as well as in its nature. The object may be either temporal or spiritual advantage, and hypocrisy may be either intentional, in order to gain an end, or it may be the secret and even unintentional result of principles imbibed, which produce an effect very different from the principles avowed. Every thing in Christianity which has a tendency to produce spiritual humility, is discarded from your system, and your adherents may be sincere, but Christians, in the proper sense of the word, they cannot be. The man who acts consistently with your theory, cannot possess all the Christian graces, and therefore he must assume a character which in reality he does not possess. A system of this kind has a direct tendency to produce new modifications of hypocrisy, and therefore should be execrated. No man is more dangerous than a hypocrite, even although his hypocrisy may be in a manner unknown to himself. The best test of sincerity is action. A genuine Christian is naturally of a retiring disposition. His heart is not in the bustle of the world. Humble and charitable, he detests ostentation, and shows his character mostly in his actions. Like a deep river, gently gliding along with unruffled surface, he pursues his course calmly and silently, diffusing around him joy and happiness. The enthusiastic hypocrite, like the shallow brook, dashing over its pebbly bed, has enough of empty sound, and is incited to action by the influence of his own feelings, and the applause of others. The true Christian, acting from a strong sense of duty, is firm and decided, because he acts from principle ; the hypocrite promises much, but, like the barren fig-tree, produces nothing but a profusion of leaves.

Have not some, however, who have embraced this system, from being thoughtless and giddy, become serious and de-

vout? It has undoubtedly in some cases produced a great change, but let us not mistake either the nature or extent of this change. Grant that such persons are under the influence of the system, they will, with the change produced in them, have all the faults to which it necessarily leads, although modified by disposition and peculiar circumstances. Those who were pious before they embraced it, are invariably made worse by the change, as it engrafts on their Christianity what should be avoided, and prevents the growth of those graces which are necessarily connected with genuine Christianity. Those who before were thoughtless and indifferent about religion, it necessarily causes to lay aside one set of feelings, and adopt another. From the operation of many different causes, certain parts of Christianity may be counterfeited; and we sadly deceive ourselves if we suppose we are Christians, because to external appearance we seem to possess *some* of the fruits of Christianity. Even Atheists and Deists have the greatest zeal in propagating their sentiments, when their utmost wish is to extirpate Christianity. Excessive pride of heart may be concealed under the plain garb of a Quaker. The feelings which are necessarily connected with your system, produce many amiable qualities, while the heart may be utterly devoid of genuine Christianity. Pursuits and circumstances give to the mind a bias of a very opposite description.

Many graces resembling those of Christianity, may be traced to other causes. For example, benevolence may be traced to constitutional sensibility; morality to weakness of passion, careful training, or a wish to gain the world's approbation; a desire of knowledge to ambition, pride, and vain feelings; so with temperance, patience, charity, zeal, and all the other graces of the Spirit. The true Christian is under the influence of a variety of feelings, very different in their nature, but all leading to the same result—giving a meetness for heaven. There is not in Scripture a single instance of an immediate change of mind from indifference to spiritual joy. There is always an awakening—the arrows

of the Lord stick fast in the soul. Witness the case of the thief on the cross—of Paul—and of the Philippian jailer.* After a change there is likewise a looking back, as well as a looking forward—thinking on former ways—trying the conduct by the standard of God's word, that as in a mirror the spiritual image may be reflected. The past, present, and anticipated conduct of the Christian, furnish many sources of sad complaint, and make him cry out in the bitterness of his heart, "Oh ! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night" for my transgressions ! In his retirement, how deep his penitence ; in his prayers, how open his confessions ; and in society, how diffident and humble his deportment. He has, indeed, a source of joy with which a stranger cannot inter-

* The Ethiopian eunuch, indeed, when he had heard the gospel message, "went on his way rejoicing." The change produced in him, however, was not a change from irreligion or indifference. He was a pious person who had gone up to the temple to worship, and he evinced the concern he had for his soul by his conduct when returning. The change produced in his mind was a change from comparative ignorance, to a clear knowledge of the plan of Redemption by Christ. He obtained a view of what Christ has done for believers, and what the believer may anticipate, and this necessarily produced joy. We know not what may have been his feelings before the gospel was preached to him ; he showed, however, by his actions, that he had been awakened to a sense of his true state before God, for he had been diligently using the proper means under the Jewish economy for obtaining peace and reconciliation. We may conclude, therefore, that the Spirit had commenced the good work of grace in his heart before Philip joined him, and that his joy was produced by the additional light he received concerning the way of access to God.— This joy is possessed by every believer, but this expresses only *one state* of his mind. In working out his salvation, he has fear and trembling, and the description of his mental workings is contained in these words, "sorrowing and rejoicing." According to the circumstances connected with his state will be his feelings, either at conversion or at any subsequent stage of his spiritual life.

meddle. He is glad in the Lord, and rejoices in the God of his salvation. Christianity produces in him the feelings of humility and gratitude, with their kindred graces. A change may be produced, in some respects resembling that which Christianity causes, when the heart is not at all affected by true religion. This very change, however, so far from making a man a Christian, may have placed him at a more hopeless distance from genuine Christianity. While he remained indifferent to religion, conscience was ever ready to remind him of danger; but now, by embracing a *semblance* of Christianity, he is lulled to rest by a false peace, and no ordinary means can disturb his fatal repose. His heart is hardening under the most dangerous of all diseases—a supposition that he is spiritually whole, when in reality he is under a dreadful spiritual malady. Self-righteous, proud, and satisfied with himself, he knows not the workings of the spiritual mind exemplified in Paul, and without his conflict or his triumph, he adopts, on false grounds, his language: “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of glory, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give unto me.”

It is a gross mistake to suppose that all who embrace your system will be influenced by it in a similar manner.—It has a variety of modifications, and partakes more or less of the spirit of Antinomianism, according to the varying circumstances with which it is connected. The man who supposes that God’s law is in part relaxed, and that he will accept of a sincere though imperfect obedience, is making a law to himself—he is against the spirituality of God’s law, and according to the degree of his aversion to God’s law, and the nature of the law he makes to himself, will be the degree of his Antinomianism.

There is a species of theoretical Antinomianism, entirely unconnected with effects on the conduct. Those who embrace this theory, indulge in it merely as a matter of speculation, and are actuated, in their walk and conversation, by principles of a very different tendency. Such were John

Agricola, Dr. Crisp, and many others, who defended the principles of Antinomianism, but allowed their speculations in no degree to affect their practice. Against all the charges of their opponents, they could refer to lives of unblemished sanctity. Their opponents traced the legitimate results of their principles; but principles may be maintained without being influential. Many write well in defence of Christianity, who are not actuated by its principles. With these it is a matter of speculation, and never descends to the heart. So with speculative Antinomians. They connect the principles of Antinomianism with false views of Scripture, till, by passing frequently through the mind, they appear true; and when opposition compels them to the means of defence, their thoughts gradually flow in one channel, and they become the abettors of Antinomianism, and view its practical results so modified, that they connect them with genuine Christianity.

Antinomianism may be disguised under the most revolting forms of hypocrisy. A hypocrite is against the law in his heart, but wishes to appear to be guided by its rules.— In the time of Cromwell, Antinomianism and personal assurance were received doctrines,* and those who held them being in practice against the law, made a law to themselves; and believing they were safe, their religious language degenerated into absolute *cant*; while, under the greatest show of piety, and with hallowed expressions dropping from their lips, they followed their own devices, and trampled on the laws of God and man.

Antinomianism, acting through fanaticism, assumes its most frightful aspect. Fancying themselves the favourites

* Shortly before his death, Cromwell, having sent for Goodwin, one of his preachers, asked him if it were true that the elect could never fall, or suffer final reprobation. "Nothing more certain," replied the Preacher. "Then I am safe," said the Protector, "for I am sure that I was once in a state of grace."

of heaven, and under a new law, the Antinomians of Germany, after the Reformation, went to the most shameful excesses. They contended against lawful authority, and by perversions of Scripture, and pretended secret revelations, made a law of their own; and committing actions, at the detail of which humanity shudders, they connected with their atrocities much apparent piety, zeal, and glowing devotion.

Enthusiasm modifies Antinomianism, and while the enthusiast is virtually an Antinomian, there is much in his religion similar to genuine Christianity. He adds to the law what accords with his warm feelings, and does not so much *oppose* the laws of God, as *caricature* them. His joy is transport—his elevation, rapture—his communion, reveries, trances, and revelations. The law of God, though exceeding broad, is too narrow for the range of his mind, and he adopts whatever else suits his feelings, and revels at large in his own spiritual experience, assurance, heavenly joy, extatic communion, beatific visions, and new revelations. These additions to the law, in part or in whole, according to the standing of the initiated, are their badges of distinction; and while the law of the Bible is still acknowledged, its mutilations and perversions are made the vehicle of their enthusiastic Antinomianism. This is the Antinomianism of Gareloch. When called Antinomians, your adherents refer to their lives as a practical refutation of the charge. Their lives, however, are a living witness of the fact. Satan is too wise for their weak heads. He adapts his temptations to their besetting sins, and in this manner gains his end. They would revolt at any other species of Antinomianism, and he allows them to take their own way, and, as an angel of light, he sees with as much pleasure the effect of their own law, as if he gained their services by any other delusion. The prince of darkness may easily be discovered amidst all their bustling spirituality, and well may they be asked, "Who hath required such things at your hands?" There is a gross mistake among people respecting their apparent piety. It is the native result of their enthu-

siasm. They are following the natural bent of their feelings. Enthusiasm cannot be silent—it is like the troubled sea, which cannot rest. Every thing peculiar about them may be traced to their peculiar principles. Christianity distorted will produce distorted practice. *They* may be “careful for nothing,”* for whom provision is made; and the priestess being seated on her shrine, a mother must provide for her wants, and thus allow her to gratify her constitutional warmth in the fervour of enthusiasm. Not one of the Bible saints acted thus; they acted for time as well as for eternity, because they were pious, and not enthusiastic.

The joy of your adherents† gives them a calm dignity; and, revelling in assurance of salvation, nothing can darken their mind, or unsmooth their brow. They possess a fancied superiority which naturally gives dignity, and operating through religious enthusiasm, makes them pleased with themselves, and pity others. “Pity melts the mind to love,” and love—enthusiastic love, urges them forward on the errand of conversion, and makes honied accents drop from their lips. Hence their pious *cant*, like that of Cromwell’s *worthy* associates;—their hatred of the creed of others, and professed anxiety for their conversion;—their kindly greetings, not in the custom of the land, but in the *holy* kiss;—their continued devotions; their prayer with embracing and groanings;‡ and psalm-singing with gestures;—and then, O Satan! thy infernal guile—trances, and gibberish, called

* See Appendix, Note B.

† Do. Note C.

‡ In their private religious exercises, the *Brethren* and *Sisters*, making all suitable allowances for their enthusiasm, conduct themselves in general with tolerable decorum; but on some occasions, when excited, or not upon their guard, they proceed to great extravagancies. In psalm-singing, the head is kept much erect, even bent backward; the eyes sometimes shut, sometimes fixed upon vacancy, or “in a fine frenzy rolling;” the hands of the company joined, and moved up and down to beat time to the music; and the appearance altogether, rather grotesque. In prayer, the *Sisters* sometimes

speaking of tongues—Bath-Kols, pretended miracles, revelations, and foretelling future events;—and then a breathless silence—the eyes wildly rolling—the frame agitated; then incoherent ejaculations—writing *unknown languages*—receiving new illuminations concerning passages of Scripture—till mind and body exhausted, rest succeeds, and a new day ushers in its train of folly.—These, Enthusiasm! are thy fruits; over which Piety drops the silent tear; and Satan revels with joy. The Spirit, vexed and grieved, retires. Angels weep over their infatuation; and the mutual sympathies between heaven and earth gradually subsiding, even Christian friends think their case so hopeless, that they feel a quivering through their veins in commending them to God; and the feelings of the Christian and relative blending together, the agitation of their minds finds vent only in sighs and tears.*

The true principle of obedience is a living faith.—This principle is not produced by man's own strength.—It is a grace inwrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, without whose gracious assistance all our efforts to obtain it are ineffectual. “By grace ye are saved through faith, and *that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.*”† “I will put my spirit within you,” says God, by the mouth of his prophet, “and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my commandments to do them.”‡ From these and other passages it is evident that the principle of true obedience is implanted by God himself, and that the source

assist the devotion of the speaker, by groans and ejaculations, and I have known a young *blood*, who sports his frock and foraging cap, in the solemnity of prayer, hug in tender embrace a young lady, and all, forsooth, for the love he had to her *soul*!!! At this detail the worldling will laugh, the gentleman feel indignant at a breach of civilised manners, and the Christian be horrified at such an incongruous mixture of the solemn and the profane.

* See Appendix, Note D. † Eph. ii. 8. ‡ Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

of sanctification is a true and genuine faith, produced in the mind by the influence of the holy Spirit. You represent the matter very differently. "The only source of sanctification," you say, "is the belief of personal forgiveness."* "The Spirit is said to enter into the heart, only after the heart has been opened by this belief of Jesus."* According to your system, therefore, man is left entirely to his own strength till he believes, and thus his faith is not only a *work* of his own, but he is made virtually the efficient cause of his own holiness, and is assisted by the Spirit only after he has believed. In this way *the Spirit perfects what the man begins!* This I consider one of the grossest of your many errors. It strikes at the root of the doctrine of free grace, and has a much more pernicious tendency than the system of Arminians. They suppose that in consequence of Christ's death, a portion of grace has been given to every man, by the improvement of which he may believe and be saved. You suppose that without grace a man may produce faith in his own mind, and thus in effect you make his salvation depend entirely on his own unaided exertions. That I am not mistaken in the view I have taken of your statements on this subject, is proved by the avowed sentiments of your adherents. A gentleman of my acquaintance, in discussing the matter with one of them lately, said that faith was the gift of God, and that without the assistance of the Spirit no man could believe. To this it was answered, "Neither can you, without the assistance of God, walk across the room, raise your hand, or move any member of your body; and yet no man in sound health ever doubts of his ability to perform these actions, and it is as much in man's own power to believe the gospel, as to perform these common actions." I have seldom heard such gross perversion of common sense. It is indeed true that we cannot perform the least action without the assistance

* Int. Essay, &c. p. xlv.

of God, but God, by giving us life and strength, has given us the ability to use spontaneously our natural faculties, and this ability we possess as a necessary part of our natural constitution. It is not so, however, in spiritual matters. Man was indeed originally formed in the image of God, but by sin we have not only lost the ability to produce in our minds proper feelings towards God, but we have lost that spiritual life from which such feelings flowed. We are spiritually dead, and as unable of ourselves to use the powers of our mind in the service of God, as a dead man is to raise his hand, or to use any of the natural faculties which belong to the human constitution. Before a dead man can move any member of his body, he must be restored to life, and before a person dead in trespasses and sins can use the powers of his mind aright, he must be restored to spiritual life. It is this which the Spirit performs. He breathes upon the dry bones, and they are quickened. The understanding, by nature shut against spiritual things, he opens to discern the truths of the Spirit as revealed in the gospel. This spiritual perception of divine things he accompanies with a firm persuasion of their truth and reality, and a strong sense of their supreme excellence and importance, which procures for them access to the will and affections. In this manner the understanding is enlightened, and the will renewed. The man being thus restored to spiritual life, is enabled, in consequence of this life, to employ his moral faculties in the service of God, in the same way as a person possessed of natural life has the ability to perform natural actions.

In an excellent Review, in the London Evangelical Magazine, of "Notes and Recollections of Two Sermons, by the Rev. Mr. Campbell of Row," in which Mr. C. has received a severe but merited castigation, it is remarked, that "as for Mr. C. and some two or three more with him, they are only what their *leader* has made them: should he be reclaimed, they cannot possibly keep their ground." In this observation, there is much truth. On the doctrine of the operation of the Spirit, Mr. C.'s language, though more

cautious than yours, leads to the same result. By comparing pages 15, 28, and 45, of No. I. of "Notes of Sermons," lately published, his opinions on this subject may be discovered, as far, at least, as the confused nature of his style will admit. He does not say as you do, that "the Spirit enters into the heart only after the heart has been opened by the belief of Jesus," but his statements convey the same sentiments, though in a disguised manner. His detached remarks may be summed up in his own words: "I can now go to God, because Christ has put away sin; I can now worship God, because Christ Jesus has the Holy Spirit for me."* Throughout the whole of the pages to which I have referred, he endeavours to urge upon his hearers that they can *of themselves* come in and accept of the pardon, and in page 15 he says, "The taking away of the condemnation, *puts me in a state* to view with open face, as in a glass, God's glory, in order to be changed into the same likeness;" and again, "The remission of my sins *puts me in a condition* to view with open face, as in a glass, God's glory." This is nearly equivalent to your statements, that "the power to believe is conferred on all," and that "the Spirit enters into the heart only after the heart has been opened by the belief." According to Mr. C. the act of viewing the removal of the condemnation changes the sinner into the likeness of the Lord, from glory to glory; and this being done by the man's viewing the remission of his sins, he is then, "by the power of the Holy Ghost, enabled to worship God."† How unlike this is to the language of our Confession of Faith, or what is more, to the language of Scripture on the subject. "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification *of the Spirit*, and belief of the truth."‡ "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were *dead in sins*, hath *quickened us* together with Christ."||

* Page 45. † Page 28. ‡ 2 Thes. ii. 13. || Eph. ii. 4. 5.

In page 28 Mr. C. says, "Take the supposition of a man attempting to lift a weight for which his unaided strength is altogether inadequate, and another man adding his own strength to his, and in this manner helping him to lift the weight. This is the amount of what men, generally speaking, recognise as the support of the Holy Ghost. According to this, it is generally believed that man has something to do in the worship of God; but this is altogether a mistake." This I consider a charge as unfounded as any of those which you have brought against the "Religion of our Land." With regard to the work of conversion, we affirm that we give the glory entirely to God, and that no man can view any thing in the work of Redemption till the eyes of his mind have been opened by the Spirit of God. So far from supposing that man has any strength of his own to enable him to come to God, we consider the unrenewed man as spiritually dead, and unable of himself to do a single action which is acceptable in the sight of God, till, by the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit, he is restored to spiritual life. With regard to the worship of God, we deny that it is generally believed by pious Christians that "man has something to do in the worship of God." We believe that the strength which enables us to worship God acceptably is entirely given us by the Spirit, and therefore Mr. C.'s illustration is totally inappropriate.

In page 30 Mr. C. remarks, that "the Holy Ghost is *now* in every true Christian *as perfectly as he was in the Apostles*; and by the power of the Holy Ghost is the Bible understood, as by his power it was written." This requires no comment. The belief of such dogmas must inevitably lead to the most dangerous enthusiasm. This enthusiasm, indeed, has already shewn itself in the most frightful forms, and it can easily be traced to its proper cause. Your adherents believe that the Holy Ghost is in them "*as perfectly as it was in the Apostles*," and consequently they must suppose that they have a perfect understanding of all that the Spirit has dictated in the word of God. Hence the confidence with

which they speak of the deep things of God, of those awful mysteries into which angels desire to look. Hence the pretended infallibility of their judgement on divine subjects, more disgusting than that of Papal authority. Hence the ridiculous extravagancies into which they have fallen, by their abuse of the phrases, *in the Spirit, by the Spirit, &c.*; and hence their pretensions to the miraculous gifts bestowed on the Apostles and primitive Christians, and which, they tell us, have been dormant in the Church these 1800 years, solely from the want of faith in professing Christians. Of these absurdities, Mr. Campbell in his Sermons, and you in the developement of your system in your different publications, have laid the foundation; and the superstructure of folly has been raised, and raised, you must allow, to a goodly height, by weak-minded females, assisted by equally weak-minded Coxcombs.

It is to me more than matter of astonishment, that Clergymen should be found, who, assuming the most imposing appearance of piety, are so utterly devoid of the principles of common honesty, as to retain office in a Church, the fundamental doctrines of which they strenuously endeavour to undermine;—that in the very place where they solemnly pledged themselves in the presence of God, to adhere to the doctrines stated in the Confession of Faith, and other standards of the Church, they should have the impiety, or at least the mean dishonesty, to violate the sacred pledge, and yet cling pertinaciously to offices which they know they have forfeited. Have such temporising Churchmen no misgivings of conscience? They must—but the whisperings of conscience are too weak for the stern authority of selfishness. A snug manse and a comfortable stipend are admirable casuists, and their influence may so affect the imagination, that what is actually wrong may appear right, and the mind, self-interested, without much struggle sincerely acquiesces. Themselves dishonest, they would wish their brethren in the ministry to follow their example, by betraying the trust reposed in them, and when, in the exercise of

parental duty, the Guardians of our Church exert their influence to reclaim their erring sons, they are stigmatised as persecutors.

Your own statements in your last publication lead directly to the same conclusion as that of your followers. I regard you as a restless spirit in Theology, and the rapid march of error which you have made since the publication of your first work, is almost unparalleled, and renders it difficult to determine where you may end in your future publications. In sacred things there is a line of demarcation which separates truth from error, and when a man has once passed this boundary, it is no easy matter to retrace his steps, and like the progress of a heavy body on an inclined plane, every advance renders return more hopeless. Socinianism has been called, by a judicious writer, the half-way-house to infidelity. Immediately after the Reformation, the great body of the Bishops and Clergy of England abandoned their own articles in favour of Arminianism. After the Revolution, one part of the Protestant Dissenters first verged towards Arminianism, then revived the Arian controversy, and by degrees many of them settled in Socinianism. At the same time another part of them, chiefly Independents, and Baptists, earnestly contending for the doctrines of grace, and conceiving that the danger of erring lay entirely on one side, first adopted high Calvinism; then forbore to exhort the unregenerate to repent, believe, or do any thing spiritually good; and by degrees settled in gross Antinomianism. There is a natural tendency in the mind, when it has once departed from truth, to advance from one error to another, till at length, involved in the mazes of scepticism, it rejects revelation, and adopts principles the most extravagant and absurd. After embracing Arminianism, the transition is easy to Socinianism, and the deluded victim of error, having denied the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity, rejects in turn every declaration of Scripture which is not in accordance with his perverted reason, and at length ends in avowed Deism, or speculates in the dreary wastes of Atheism.

Since the publication of your "Remarks on the Internal Evidence of Revealed Religion," you have been rapidly departing from the simplicity of the truth, and in such a manner as affords reason to fear the worst from your future publications. This may be seen by comparing a few of the statements contained in your different publications.

PROGRESS OF ERROR.

From "Remarks on the Internal Evidence of Revealed Religion."

According to the revealed record, that *combination of justice and of mercy* which was manifested on the cross, is *the exclusive ground of hope before God.* p. 124.

The doctrine of the atonement, by the incarnation and death of Christ, is illustrative of the Divine mercy, and vindicative of the Divine holiness ; it is a foundation of hope before God, amply sufficient for the most guilty of men ; and it is fitted to implant in the vilest heart which will receive it, the principles of *true penitence* and true gratitude, of ardent attachment to the holy character of God, and of a cordial devotion to his will. p. 139.

The Divine government is just a vivid expression of the great moral attribute of God, "that he loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity." A simple pardon, bestowed without any accompanying circumstances, must have drawn some degree of gratitude from the criminal, if he knew his danger ; and this would have been all : But when he views the perfect and holy obedience of a great benefactor as the ground of his pardon, he is induced to look with love and admiration towards that obedience which gained the Divine favour, as well as towards the friend who paid it. A feeling of *humble and affectionate dependence* on the Saviour, a dread and hatred of sin, and a desire after holiness, are the natural fruits of the belief of this doctrine. p. 147.

That the belief of the gospel is, in every instance, the work of the holy Spirit, no one who believes the Bible can doubt ; and indeed this doctrine is the ground of the Christian's confidence that he shall continue steadfast unto the end. p. 156.

There is nothing new in this cursory sketch of Christian doctrines. Indeed, I should conceive a proof of novelty on such a subject as tantamount to a proof of error.

From "Essays on Faith."

The Gospel is a general name for an object which consists of several parts, and contains various appeals to the moral understanding of man. p. 42.

We are not to imagine that pardon is created by believing the gospel, as if faith were the ground of forgiveness. No ; the gospel itself is the proclamation of pardon through the perfect atonement of Christ, and it is the belief of the all-sufficiency of this proclaimed ground of pardon remaining in the memory, and operating on the heart, which makes meet for the inheritance of the saints in bliss. The Apostle Peter, accordingly, in his second epistle, stirs up the pure minds of Christians by way of remembrance, and presses upon their attention truths with which he knew they were acquainted. In the 9th verse of the first chapter he ascribes the deficiency in Christian virtues and graces to a forgetfulness of the atonement, that great work, in the belief of which, they had before found deliverance from guilt. "He that lacks these things is blind, shutting his eyes, and forgetting that by which he was formerly washed from his sins." The knowledge of the atonement it was which first produced these qualities in the heart, and it is the continued remembrance of the atonement which alone can keep them in life, and strengthen and expand them. p. 101.

Repentance necessarily accompanies a new belief. p. 113.

The gospel is an annunciation of pardon and favour from God to sinners. p. 125.

Faith in the gospel will produce peace and joy in proportion to its strength. p. 132.

The pardon was virtually obtained by Christ before they (believers) ever heard of it. p. 138.

Without whom (the Holy Spirit) no son of man has ever believed unto everlasting life. p. 142.

From "Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel," and "Introductory Essay to Extracts of Letters."

The Gospel is, "God forgiving every man, having already condemned the sin of every man in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ."—Intro. p. lx.

What is the Gospel? It is nothing, and can be nothing else than a manifestation of God in relation to sinners. Uncon. Free. p. 28.

Pardon is proclaimed freely and universally,—it is perfectly gratuitous,—it is unconditional and unlimited,—but heaven is limited to those who are sanctified by the belief of the pardon. Do. p. 13.

The use of faith is not to remove the penalty, or to make the pardon better—for the penalty is removed, and the pardon is proclaimed whether we believe it or not—but to give the pardon a moral influence, by which it may heal the spiritual diseases of the heart.—Do. p. 24.

The only source of sanctification is the belief of personal forgiveness. Intro. p. xlv.

God exhorts men to obedience, just on this very ground, "that God in Christ hath forgiven them," and ascribes their lack of the Christian virtues just to *their forgetfulness that they had been washed from their old sins*. Eph. iv. 32. 2 Peter i. 9. Do. p. liii.

No man can do the smallest act of obedience to God's law until he believes that his many sins *have been washed out in the blood of the Lamb*—for no man loves until he believes this—and whenever he forgets this, he becomes incapable of any obedience, for it is written, "He that lacks godliness, temperance, brotherly kindness; or charity—lacks them in consequence of his forgetting that he was purged from his old sins." Do. p. xlv.

True repentance and faith are *just the same thing*. Do. p. lxi.

Personal assurance is not an advanced stage in the Christian life, it is the very first step out of unbelief. Do. p. xxxvii.

We must either suppose that there is a deception in the Bible, or we must suppose that every man has the power of coming to God, if he chooses. Uncon. Free. p. 63.

ELECTION.

Our limited capacities can comprehend only a small part of the doings of God, and understand but partially the nature of his proceedings. If we endeavour to be wise above what is written, or to make reason comprehend the movements of an infinite Being, we arrogantly attempt to reduce the all-wise Jehovah to the level of our own comprehensions. Our minds may understand the connexion that exists between the actions of a being like ourselves and the end which they are intended to accomplish, but human reason has its allotted range in which to move, and beyond this it cannot proceed. An angel may distinctly understand what man cannot; yet God has performed certain actions which even an angel may not be able to comprehend. This, however does not prove that in these actions God had no end in view, or that there was no necessary connection between the actions and the end which they were to accomplish. It proves only that the faculties even of an angel are too limited fully to comprehend the doings of an infinite Being. What we do not understand we cannot know to be wrong. Not attending to this axiom is with many a great cause of error. Because their reasoning faculties cannot grasp the subject of God's decrees, they conclude that such decrees have no existence. They seem to forget that they are employing their reason on a subject above its reach.

Such persons ought to remember that though *they* cannot reconcile the operations of Omnipotence to the principles established by imperfect reason, other beings of more exalted understandings may be able to harmonise them with the strictest principles of rectitude.

No argument, founded on principles which we do not understand, can disprove a proposition which we do understand; and we are able fully to comprehend the statements of many facts, although the nature of these facts is entirely beyond our comprehension. The statement of the fact that God has from eternity fore-ordained all events, and of the other fact that man is a free moral agent, can be easily comprehended and received by our finite minds; but to understand fully how these two facts can be reconciled, is above the reach of human reason. As we do not, then, understand the nature of the facts stated in the propositions, we cannot prove that the statements are false, though they seem to our finite reason contradictory; and we must receive them as truths, solely on the authority of the word of God. If we suppose that the conclusions of reason are infallible, we must deny the existence of a first cause. Unaided reason is as unable to comprehend how the Supreme Being could exist without a cause, as to understand how he has fore-ordained all events, and that yet man is a free agent. Because reason concludes that every effect must have a cause, are we to rest in its conclusions, and deny the existence of a first cause? Again, if the conclusions of reason are to be supposed infallible, how shall we account for the existence of the world around us? Reason concludes that it could not be self-caused. A first cause could not produce it, for, according to the deductions of reason, there can be no such cause. Upon this principle, then, we must conclude that the world is neither the effect of a previous cause, nor the cause of its own existence. If we follow up the consequences which naturally flow from believing nothing but what is agreeable to the dictates of our limited reason, we must reject the first principle of all religion—the exist-

ence of a first cause, and being left without a cause to create, we shall next be compelled to deny the evidence of our senses, and conclude with some sceptical philosophers, that every thing which we fancy we see around us is ideal.

To avoid consequences so revolting to the unsophisticated mind, we must believe many things which we cannot comprehend. That God has from all eternity unalterably fore-ordained all events, which have happened or will happen, and as a part of this act of pre-ordination, has elected some of the human race to everlasting life, and been pleased, in the exercise of his infinite wisdom, to pass by others, are facts, which, though not in unison with the natural mind of man, are clearly and repeatedly asserted in Scripture. No doctrine of the Christian creed has been the subject of more frequent or more strenuous controversy, than the doctrine of Election. There appears to exist in the natural mind a strong bias against it, and many even of those who profess to believe that it is revealed in the word of God, endeavour as much as possible to keep it out of view, by declining to converse concerning it, or even to make it a subject of contemplation. By others the doctrine has not only been absolutely denied, but calumniated in the most shocking manner, and represented as leading to consequences alike contrary to the word of God, and revolting to Christian feelings. Those who maintain the doctrine have been charged by its enemies with making God the author of sin, and representing him as a cruel and capricious tyrant. The doctrine has been represented as destroying all freedom of moral agency, and introducing into the Christian system the iron-handed Necessity, or Blind Destiny of the Stoics. It has been asserted, likewise, that it contradicts the doctrine of man's accountability, and completely frustrates all his efforts to attain virtue and happiness.

These are indeed heavy charges, and it must be confessed, that the deep-rooted prejudice which men evince against the doctrine of Election, has been partly caused by the injudicious manner in which some of its friends have proceed-

ed to explain and defend it, from the weakness of their arguments and the use of unguarded expressions. It is a subject which should be discussed with the greatest caution and humility, as even an apparently trifling mistake in the statement may lead to the most dangerous consequences.

The testimony of Scripture with regard to this doctrine is distinct and decided. From it we learn, that God did from eternity, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, and for the manifestation of his glory, freely and unalterably predestinate a certain number of our race to everlasting life. This act of predestination was not conditional, or in consequence of his foreseeing that the objects of it would possess faith, or persevere in a course of holiness, but solely out of his own free grace and sovereign good pleasure.—As God has unalterably decreed the salvation of those whom he has chosen as the heirs of glory, he has in like manner decreed all the means for that purpose, and these means will be made effectual to every one of the elected number. “Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”* The rest of mankind, God, in the exercise of the same sovereign good pleasure which induced him to fore-ordain a certain number to eternal happiness, was pleased not to elect, but to pass by; and all whom he has so passed by will receive the punishment of their sins in a future state. This decree of God, however, neither affects the free agency of man, so as to destroy his accountability, nor makes God in any sense the author of sin, nor the procuring cause of the sinner’s condemnation. It limits not the universal freeness of the gospel invitations, for although those who are elected are particularly and unalterably designed, yet we are assured that none ever sought God’s face in vain, and that Christ is able and willing to extend the arms of his mercy to every returning penitent.

* Romans viii. 30.

Some who believe in the doctrine of Election suppose that it is conditional, or in other words, they suppose that God from eternity determined to create man, and foreseeing that he would fall, designed to bestow upon him a certain portion of grace, which, if duly improved, would be sufficient for reclaiming him from sin; and as he likewise foreknew who would, and who would not improve the means of grace, he determined as the consequence of this, to save some and condemn others.

This view of election is highly objectionable. It supposes that the salvation of man depends entirely on his own exertions, and robs God of the glory of accomplishing the redemption of our lost race, by the Spirit's application of the blessings of Christ's purchase. It is, besides, not only unsupported by Scripture, but is at direct variance with the whole tenor of the word of God on this subject. Nothing is more distinctly implied in Scripture than that God's election of some to eternal life originated entirely from his own sovereign pleasure. The principles of independence are so strongly implanted in the human heart, that it is generally with the greatest reluctance that we receive, or acknowledge when received, the assistance of another.—We cannot deny that God, as our Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer, is justly entitled to all our services. These, however, he does not receive. On this account we know that we have forfeited all claim to the happiness of heaven as the reward of our own obedience, but still we are inclined to suppose that our own works, imperfect though they be, are so far meritorious as to be of some advantage in procuring our salvation. We wish to have a share of the glory of our own redemption. Unrenewed men in general acknowledge their need of assistance from God, but they also suppose that by their own strength they can do much in gaining the heavenly inheritance. To such sentiments the Scriptures are decidedly opposed. They entirely exclude all boasting. They assure us, in language not to be misunderstood, that our salvation is of grace, not of works.

The rising pride of the self-righteous they mortify by such questions as these:—"What maketh thee to differ from another? What hast thou that thou didst not receive?"—Those who have made the highest attainments in the divine life, are represented by them as receiving the strength which enabled them to do so, entirely from the free grace of God. The works of the best of men they represent as nothing, unless they originate from principles which God himself implants and supports. "Unto you it is given in behalf of Christ to believe on him."* "By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."†

This may be further illustrated by the history of Paul.—Every virtue which could adorn humanity, or shed a lustre around the Christian character, met in this distinguished Apostle. If ever man had whereof to boast, it was Paul. Compared with his fellow-labourers, he was "not a whit behind the chief of the Apostles." Had this been the standard by which he was to be finally tried, he might have anticipated heaven as the sure reward of obedience. This, however, he knew was not the standard by which he was required to compare himself;—it was by the law and the testimony. Casting a thoughtful glance over its requirements, he stands appalled and self-condemned at the wide expanse which stretches between him and perfection. He now abhors himself, and exclaims in the language of genuine humility, that he was as undeserving of heaven by works as the chief of sinners. If Paul, therefore, could not depend on his own works for placing him among the elect, works can entitle no man to that distinction. As he obtained it solely from the unmerited and unconditional grace of God, all the elect must obtain it through the same channel. These remarks are confirmed by what the Apostle says concerning the election of Jacob.‡ Jacob was not elected on

* Phil. i. 29.

† Eph. ii. 8.

‡ See Romans ix.

account of works performed, for these he had not done : neither was he elected on account of works foreseen, for there is another cause assigned by the Apostle for his election. If, then, he was not elected on account of works performed or works foreseen, his election must have originated solely from the sovereign pleasure of God. That it did so; the Apostle expressly assures us, when he says that Jacob was elected "that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand; not of works, but of him that calleth."*

It may be objected that election is frequently spoken of in Scripture, as if it depended on the performance of certain conditions. I answer, that there are certain actions necessary to be performed by every elected person, but these cannot with propriety be called conditions of election. The performance of these actions is as unalterably decreed in the counsels of the Most High as the salvation of the person by whom they are performed. Their performance depends not on ourselves. Even the elect are as unable of themselves to perform these actions as to gain heaven without their performance. It is indispensably necessary for an elected person to come to Christ, but this we know he cannot do of himself. Does he therefore lose the benefits of his election? No; for the Spirit enables him to come to Christ. He performs the action by the grace of God, who gives him assistance; and as of this duty, so of all the other duties of a Christian. Nothing is required from an elected person, but what he is enabled by the Spirit constantly and cheerfully to perform. The performance of the necessary duties, and his election, though separable in idea, are inseparable in fact. An elected sinner and a reprobate saint are contradictions in terms. The means of an elected person's salvation, are not the cause, but the necessary effect of his election. Every one who is elected is called, then

* Verse 11.

justified and sanctified before he enjoys the ultimate benefits of his election. God, by the agency of his Spirit, works in him both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.

There is no portion of the sacred record in which the doctrine of Election is so fully stated as in the ninth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans. This may be called the focus in which the statements of the doctrine are concentrated. It is here declared in the most express and unambiguous language; the objections which might be urged against the doctrine are anticipated and refuted; and it is enforced by the most irresistible appeals to the heart, upon principles acknowledged and acted on in the common affairs of mankind. Many, however, suppose, that in this chapter the Apostle is speaking, not of a particular election, but of the general election of the children of Israel to be God's peculiar people among the nations. Some even of those who acknowledge a particular election, think that it is not directly taught in this passage. They allow, however, that from this passage it is indirectly deducible. Proceeding, they say, on the granted assumption that God elects nations, he may, on the same principles, elect individuals. This is so far well, had it been first proved that the Apostle here undoubtedly refers only to a general election. That the doctrine of a particular election, however, is decidedly taught in this passage, appears, I think, from the following reasons. 1st. In the Scriptures generally, and in Paul's writings particularly, a line of distinction is evidently drawn between Jewish believers and unbelievers, as well as between Jews and Gentiles. If such a distinction can be traced in the passage under consideration, the inference undeniably follows, that the Apostle refers to an individual election. This distinction is expressly stated in verses 6, 7, 8, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28. In these verses a distinguishing choice is made between natural and spiritual Israelites; therefore between individuals, and not between Jews and Gentiles. In verse 6. it is said: "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." The natural descendants of Israel were certainly all Israel-

ites; how then can the Apostle say, they are not all Israelites who are descended from Israel? The reason is, because the term Israel has two significations, in both of which it is here used. Keeping this in view, the obvious meaning of the verse is, "They are not all spiritual Israelites, who are the natural descendants of Israel." If, then, election is the subject of this chapter, those in this verse called *the Israel* are elected; and those said not to be *the Israel* are rejected.

Again, in the 7th, 8th, and 9th verses, this doctrine is taught; not by the election of some of the same nation, and the rejection of the remainder, but by the election of one member of a family, and the rejection of another. "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called; that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." The Jews boasted of having Abraham for their father, and in these verses, the Apostle meets them on this supposition. He shews that even this could not make them the spiritual children of the promise, for only one of the immediate descendants of Abraham was the child of promise, and the other was a child of the flesh. These immediate descendants of Abraham were typical of the Jews in a spiritual sense, for one of them was not a child of God, but of the flesh, while the other was a child counted for seed. As God, therefore, made a sovereign election between Isaac and Ishmael, so this election was a type of what he would do with others of Abraham's posterity. That is—as he had elected one, and rejected the other, in Abraham's family, so he would, in like manner, make a sovereign election among the Jews, by choosing some and rejecting others.

Lest the Jews should suppose that this case did not completely confirm the Apostle's argument, because Ishmael was not rejected till he had proved himself unworthy of his

descent from Abraham, he selects an instance, in which the election was not only particular, but entirely an act of sovereignty. "And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac, (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,) it was said unto her: The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."* Before these two children were born, the election of the one to rule, and the other to serve, was declared. This was done, too, not from any foreseen works, but "that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand." As God, therefore, had used his sovereign power in his proceedings towards these children, acting on the same principles, he would elect some of their posterity; and reject others. I am aware that the objection may be urged, that these quotations from the Old Testament have a different signification in the original writers, from what I have supposed them to have in the Apostle's argument. The original writers speak of temporal, not of spiritual benefits, and not of Jacob and Esau personally, but of their descendents. I answer, that we have nothing to do with the meaning of these passages in their original application. The question is, how are they used in the chapter before us? Why does the Apostle introduce them into his argument? Certainly not to give it an improper direction. The premises laid down as the foundation of his argument are, "They are not all Israel which are of Israel," and every quotation, if pertinently introduced, must illustrate and confirm this proposition. To illustrate his argument he may take part of passages, which as a whole, have a different signification, and apply for illustration the part so selected. The passage so quoted becomes part of his argument, and by the principles of acco-

* Verses 10, 11, 12 and 13.

modation, loses its original meaning, and assumes the ideas attached to the argument of which it now forms a part. This accommodation of passages is employed both by sacred and profane authors. Of the latter, it is unnecessary to give a single example, every person's memory will furnish him with many, and of the former, two will be sufficient for my purpose.

The first of these occurs in 1 Corinthians ix. 9. "For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." The proposition stated in this chapter is, that every man should live by his profession, or that wages should be given to the labourer. In the illustration of this proposition, the Apostle quotes a passage from the law, which requires inferior animals to receive a reward for their labour, and by accommodation makes it illustrate the proposition he is endeavouring to establish. Another instance of the same is found in Acts xv. 15, 16, 17. "And to this agree the words of the prophet, as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things." This passage is quoted by James, from Amos ix. 11, and there refers to the return from captivity. The Apostle applies it to the spread of the gospel. These different significations are easily discernible by attending to the connexion which the passage has with the subject which the respective writers are discussing.

The passages quoted by Paul in the chapter before us, are under such circumstances. The declaration, "The elder shall serve the younger," in Genesis xxv. 23, refers to the descendants of Jacob and Esau. This reference is dropped by Paul, and only so much is quoted as bears directly on the proposition, "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." The other quotation, "Jacob have I loved, and

Esau have I hated,"* from Malachi i. 2; refers to temporal benefits. This connexion likewise is dropped by the Apostle, and only so much of the passage quoted as serves to illustrate his argument. Malachi and he have different ends in view. The prophet has to obviate an objection brought forward by the Jews, viz. that if God loved Jacob, and hated Esau, it did not appear from his dealings. For this purpose he proves that the posterity of Jacob were more highly favoured than that of Esau, and thus shews that the objection is groundless. The Apostle has no objection of this kind to obviate. He has an argument to illustrate, the terms of which refer not to temporal, but exclusively to spiritual benefits. It does well for Malachi's purpose to shew how God hated the posterity of Esau, by laying his mountains and heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness, but what would these proofs of hatred have availed in the Apostle's argument, when he is speaking only of spiritual benefits? They would have been quite apart from his subject. He therefore only quotes as much as may be accommodated to illustrate and establish his argument. And as Guyse well remarks on this subject, "Why should we not understand the passage as far as the Apostle quotes it, in an accommodated sense, suitable to the tenor of his dis-

* Parkhurst wishes the word *μισσησθαι* here applied to Esau, to be taken in a comparative sense, as it is in Matthew vi. 24, where it implies, not the total absence of love, but only an inferior degree of that affection. To this opinion I cannot assent. In this passage the word must be taken absolutely, not comparatively, else it will not suit the Apostle's argument. He is not treating of a subject which admits of degrees, but of one, the parts of which must be taken either positively or negatively. The illustration, if at all appropriate, must have a similar signification. The subject is Election. The choosing of some necessarily implies the absolute rejection of others. Jacob and Esau represent these two classes. The election of Jacob and the rejection of Esau are therefore expressly declared by the use the Apostle makes of them to illustrate his argument.

course, as signifying Esau and Jacob personally considered, and so giving us leading examples of a personal election of some to all the blessings mentioned in the foregoing chapter, and of God's passing by others; since these two persons are mentioned by name, and the event proved that Jacob was a good man who was blessed with spiritual benefits, and is now in heaven; (See Luke xiii. 28,) and Esau is spoken of as a profane person, who sold his birth-right, and all the spiritual, as well as temporal blessings pertaining to it. Heb. xii. 16."*

The second reason I offer to prove that the Apostle in this chapter is treating of an individual, and not a general election, is from the answers he returns to the objections supposed to be brought forward against this doctrine. The first objection is, that it is unjust in God to elect some and reject others. In reply to this, he asks the objector, "Is there unrighteousness with God?" Such a supposition requires no refutation by argument, and therefore he answers it in the language of indignation:—"God forbid." The Jews readily acknowledged that hitherto God had been just and true in all his ways. They were ready, however, to insinuate, that if the Apostle's doctrine was true, his proceedings would now be different from what they formerly were, and if he was righteous before, he could not be so now. This seems to have been the state of the matter between Paul and the Jews. They did not dispute the righteousness of God, but supposed that Paul imputed proceedings to God in his moral government, which divested him of righteousness in principle. Hence their supposed objection:—"Is there unrighteousness with God?" Paul, therefore, in removing this objection, had not to prove that God was righteous, but that particular election was an act similar to others to which they assented. He shews them first in verses 15, 16 and 17, that their law acknowledged the

* See Guyse's Paraphrase.

sovereign power of God to choose and reject. These general principles of their law he illustrates by the case of Pharaoh, for he was raised up to answer a particular purpose in the moral government of God. From this he concludes, that God may leave man to the natural hardness of his heart, or in his sovereign pleasure, have mercy on him. The Jews could not withhold their assent from this conclusion, as it was legitimately deduced from God's proceedings recorded in their law, and hence it followed that if God had formerly shown his power to choose or reject, and had acted on these principles towards Pharaoh, there could be no unrighteousness in his now declaring the same principles, and acting on them in the election and rejection of individual Jews.

This objection being answered, another naturally arises from it, viz. since man cannot resist the will of God, but is used by him to advance his purposes, why should he find fault with man so circumstanced? Paul indignantly repels this objection. The objector never disputes the sovereign power of the potter to make of the clay before him what vessels he pleases, and yet he quarrels with Omnipotence for using a similar power over that dust into which he has breathed the breath of life. Well might Paul say to such an arrogant objector, "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?"

A third reason for supposing that in this chapter the Apostle treats of a particular election, is the application of the argument, contained in verses 22, 23 and 24. There is in these verses such a marked contrast, and such a particular application, that if the Apostle was treating of a general election, I confess I cannot see the propriety of the inferences here deduced. The vessels of wrath are contrasted to the vessels of glory. *Us*, the called, in verse 24, are not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. No particular reference is made to temporal benefits, or collective bodies of people. I should rather say there is no reference at all. The application refers exclusively to spiritual blessings, and to individuals. If the Apostle is treating

of a general election, such inferences are not only "strange," but "passing strange." They have no connexion with the subject.

Your opinions of Election may be known from two sources—from the bearing which your avowed statements on other subjects have on this; and from your direct statements concerning the doctrine. The prescience of God is indisputable, and therefore I shall take it for granted that it forms a part of your creed. Knowledge, however, may exist where there is not power, and power where there is not action. The power of God you must acknowledge to be unlimited, but you seem not to allow that this power is exercised, in the act of election at least. You expressly deny eternal election. In other words, the phrase, "whom he did foreknow," is perhaps alike understood by us, but "The purpose of God according to election," we understand differently. Independently of Scripture declarations, I suppose from the nature of God that election is an eternal decree; whereas you connect it with a particular time in the history of those who embrace the supposed general pardon. With the Arminians, therefore, you deny particular election, and suppose the election declared in the Bible to be of a general nature, referring to churches or nations. On this point you agree with the champion of the Arminians, Dr. Whitby: I come to this conclusion from the nature of the doctrines you have espoused, and I know that your adherents, acting legitimately on your system, directly coincide with Whitby. In so doing they are consistent, and I take it for granted that you are the same. The passage from Romans which I have particularly analysed, was some time ago referred to by a gentleman of my acquaintance, as completely opposed to the views of a clergyman who had adopted your opinions, and he, without attempting to give a reason, said that the Apostle was treating of a national, and not a particular election.

There is a difficulty in ascertaining exactly what are your opinions with regard to the *cause* of Election. As there is a

something, even in your system, which you call election; are the elected chosen by an act of sovereignty on the part of God; or are their foreseen acceptance of the pardon, and continuance in faith, the grounds of their election? You have not said with the Arminians, that a portion of grace has been bestowed on every man, by improving which he may turn from error to serve the living God; but your system is consistent, for you say that "forgiveness was sealed to all, and the power to believe it *conferred upon all*."*—You talk of an *electing power compelling to come in*, but the meaning which you attach to this phrase, as it is a Scripture declaration of general application, can only be learned from other parts of your system. According to your system, the Spirit is not the agent in this change, for you expressly say that "the Spirit is said to enter into the heart, *only after* the heart has been opened by this belief of Jesus."† Man, then, is left to himself, to put forth the act of believing, without the assistance of the Spirit, and of course his reception of the truth rests with himself, and is entirely his own act. Your system on these points is not fully developed, but its direct bearing by induction, and the bearing of your phrases, prove that at present, it is at least Arminianism modified. According to the legitimate bearing of your system, God foresees who will accept of pardon, by "the power to believe" which you suppose is "conferred upon all," and this forms the condition of their election. What is this but Arminianism in a mist? You may say, indeed, that their election arises from the sovereignty of God, because he *compels them to come in*, but by *compelling* you can mean nothing more than that the individual acquires a *willingness*, for you say that "*the power to believe has been conferred on all*." This willingness must be produced either by the gospel considered by the understanding, or by the direct influence of the Spirit on the heart, or through the word. The latter you do not acknowledge in your last publication, and

* Introd. Essay, &c. page lxix. † Do. page xlv.

therefore you must suppose that the word read or preached, of itself, without divine influence either accompanying it or preparing the heart for its reception, confers this willingness. It is thus an ordinary operation of the mind. A man may *come in* or *remain without*, as he pleases; the power is his own, and as you do not recognise the agency of the Spirit in conversion, conversion is in man's own power, and the *being compelled by willingness of mind*, is simply accepting the pardon, not in a day of Divine power, but in the day in which the power supposed to be "*conferred on all*" is exercised.

So far you are connected with Arminians, but with this difference, that your system has all the faults of theirs, without any of its candour. Their declarations are unguarded, yours are disguised. They are fitted to please an Arminian friend, and at the same time so ambiguous as not to startle the unthinking Calvinist.—“Gardez-vous d'écouter les paroles douces et flatteuses de * * * * *, qui se glisserent comme un serpent sous les fleurs; craignez ce poison cache.”*

You have, however, gone beyond the Arminians in this doctrine. They acknowledge that election, as referring to God, is eternal, although when referring to man, they explain it to answer their own system; but by your explanation of it, you entirely blot out from the Christian scheme, what can be called election. Christianity is a whole made up of parts, and each part has its allotted station. This is beautifully attended to by the Apostle in the passage formerly quoted from Romans.† “Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” This connection of parts you forget, and, wholly intent on your own system, you destroy the harmony of the Christian scheme. What you call *election*, the Bible denominates *calling*, or to give it the appellation used in our Church standards, *effectual calling*.

* Les Aventures de Telemaque. † Chap. viii. 30.

Your election is not election, but the result of election. The compelling to come in is not the decree, but the effect of the decree—not the purpose of Heaven, but the accomplishment of that purpose. A purpose is one thing, and the fulfilment of that purpose another. The purpose is as distinct from the means taken to carry it into effect, as your determination to come to Gareloch in summer is from the means you will employ to effect that purpose. The election of an individual to any office, and the calling to that office, are distinct. The one is *without* the individual, though specifically referring to him; the other is the announcement of the choice which has been made. Election, as an act, is hid in the deep counsels of God, and the manifestation of this purpose is made in Effectual Calling. Election itself you wish to make Effectual Calling, and that system must be wretchedly defective, which not only requires such perversion of language, but confounds what God has in his word so expressly separated, and stated so distinctly that he who runs may read. But you have taken your *stand* for a system, and election with you is not election, but the *compelling to come in*, or the putting forth of the power which has been conferred on all men; and the effectual calling of the sinner, is with you what it is not in fact—election. You had better ideas concerning the Spirit and Election, when you penned these words, though they are connected with much error: “This is the great mystery in religion. Here we pass into the infinite, and are lost. One is taken, and another left. One heart is made to hear the voice of God, and learns from that voice, what flesh and blood cannot reveal,—another reads the Bible, and hears sermons, and goes through forms of prayer, and seems even to long after spiritual religion; and yet he continues a stranger to spiritual communion with God. What is the meaning of this? God is the great King in all the earth.—He doeth what seemeth him good. But he has promised the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. And yet the very disposition to ask him is his own gift.”*

* Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel, page 62.

RESURRECTION.*

We derive our ideas of time from the relation which it has to motion. An hour, for example, is the twenty-fourth part of the time in which the earth performs its diurnal revolution. The idea, likewise, which we have of the difference between longer and shorter periods of time, is relative, not absolute. The life of man, in relation to time, is short; and in relation to eternity, is as a nothing in duration.

There is no calculation which man mistakes so much, as that respecting his own existence. He may state accurately the divisions of certain portions of time, but he errs in giving to it an imaginary duration. Looking down the vista of futurity, he calculates on the probabilities of life, and having so much imaginary time before him, he marks out for himself an allotted portion of years, months, weeks, and days; and his little span of existence swells before his mind, as a protracted period, the termination of which is far distant. Just conceptions of the duration of our existence are obtained, not from the anticipation of coming years, but from

* There are two Greek words which in our version are both rendered Resurrection, viz : *Αναστασις* and *Εγερσις*. The former, however, usually denotes a future existence, as in Matthew xxii. 28; the latter is the appropriate term for Resurrection, signifying the rising of the body from the grave, as in Matthew xxvii. 53.

a review of those which are past. A prospective view of life gives it an imaginary duration, but a retrospective view of any past period fixes its duration from the result of experience.

Man's mortal existence is limited indeed. The half of mankind die before they arrive at the age of seven years.—A generation, on an average calculation, extends only to about 30 years, and the span of man's feverish existence is limited to three-score and ten, or four-score years. The thought is mournfully sublime, that of this world's population, consisting of upwards of eight hundred millions, scarcely any will outlive a century. The thought may be less sublime, but it is equally impressive, that every second of time, as it hurries into the dark unknown of eternity, tolls the funeral knell of a human being. The consideration becomes still more impressive, when we reflect that in a very short time, we ourselves must submit to the stroke of dissolution. Death has received the commission, Go into the world, strike, strike. Then comes the thickening breath, the morbid hue steals over the countenance, and Death closes the scene of man's mortal existence. But will the stillness of the tomb never be disturbed? Will not the dust be reanimated—will not the dead bones live? Yes;—the heavens open—a sound is heard, which “pierces the dull, cold ear of Death”—the earth heaves—the sea tosses to and fro—Death dies—mankind start into conscious existence. The beamless eye sparkles—the listless ear is attentive—and body and soul are inseparably united. “All that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth.”

The proofs of a Resurrection are furnished principally, if not solely, from Scripture. Reason finds so many difficulties connected with the subject of a resurrection, that, unable to substantiate its theories by facts, its unaided conclusions end in scepticism. Hence the Heathen generally denied a resurrection, and their example is followed by the greater number of those who reject the authority of Revealed Re-

ligion. The proof of this doctrine rests not on abstract declarations, it finds its way to our hearts by a striking example. Christ foretold his own resurrection. On the third day he burst the bands of Death, and by rising as the first fruits of those who sleep, he gave the most satisfactory pledge of his power to confer on his people all the anticipated blessings connected with the Resurrection.

Will the same body rise? This is a question which has been agitated by philosophers in all ages of Christianity, but the controversy seems to be more concerning words than things. If by *the same body* is meant the same atoms which during our mortal existence compose the body, the question may, without hesitation, be answered in the negative. The particles which compose the human frame are in a continual state of change, and it has been calculated by philosophers that the whole of the atoms which form the body of man, are entirely changed in the course of every seven years. On this subject Scripture, too, furnishes a decisive answer. "Thou fool," says the Apostle, in writing to the Corinthian church, "that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed its own body."

If by *the same body* is intended the same constitution, qualities, and arrangement; in this case, likewise, the question may be answered negatively. The human body has undergone such a change in consequence of the fall of Adam, that in its present state it cannot be an inhabitant of the celestial paradise. It must undergo a complete change, to fit it to become the receptacle of an immortal and glorified spirit. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

That the body, however, will be the same at the resurrection, so as to constitute identity, is clearly stated in scripture. "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself,

and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me.”* “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.”† The spirits of the redeemed, in their state of separation from the body, recognise each other. Those who come from the different quarters of the world are represented as knowing the Patriarchs. Abraham, Lazarus, and the rich man in the parable, had a knowledge of each other. This knowledge cannot be the result of experience; it must be derived from immediate revelation, before the resurrection in an unembodied state, and after the resurrection in an embodied state. It was so with the Apostles on the Mount of Transfiguration. Moses and Elias they could not know from experience; but by a direct revelation they knew that it was Moses unembodied, and Elias embodied. In heaven, knowing not merely countless multitudes of our associates, but knowing their history; what strength of faculties will be communicated, to enable us to embrace this infinite range of knowledge; and how sublime will be the employment—how delightful the exercise, to trace, among endless wonders, spiritual conflicts, mental transformations, and triumphs over spiritual enemies, the intricacies of Providence unfolded, with their bearing on man’s destiny. A foretaste of this knowledge, with its connecting circumstances, the Apostles felt on the Mount of Transfiguration; and even this was so transporting, that Peter exclaimed, “It is good for us to be here;” and will not the reality be ravishing, when, in the immediate presence of our heavenly Father—of Christ our elder Brother—of the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier—and of angels and glorified spirits, the recollection of the past will be vivid, and we will know the history of others, even as we by them are known; and yet with faculties so strong, that we will

* Job xix. 26, 27.

† Philip. iii. 21.

neither be overcome with the grandeur of known events, nor bewildered by their variety.

We may conclude, therefore, that in the mansions of bliss, friend will recognise friend; the parent will recognise the child, and the child the parent; and those who on earth shed the tear of bereavement for beloved relatives, will there exultingly meet the objects of their tender affections, and find their enjoyment of the glories of heaven heightened, by partaking it along with those to whom on earth they were connected by the closest ties. We cannot suppose, however, that in heaven there will be distinct societies formed of those, who in this world were endeared to each other. There, earthly relations will be in a manner annihilated, and all the redeemed will constitute one grand family, united by the indissoluble bonds of eternal love.

From the analogy of nature, there exists a strong presumption in favour of the doctrine of a Resurrection. Sleep has been beautifully termed "the image of death," and in the restoration of the powers of the mind from a state of dormancy, we have a striking emblem of the resurrection. Every returning year brings before our minds an idea of the same glorious event, in the restoration of the vegetable world to life and beauty. But the changes which insects undergo, furnish us with the clearest type of the resurrection. The most beautiful winged insects are ushered into life in the state of worms. The butterfly which sports in the sun-beam, was once a caterpillar. Having completed the period of its existence in that humble form, it spun itself a tomb, and died. Within its shell it was dissolved into a mass of water, and seemed for ever deprived of life and motion. In a short time, however, the tomb in which it was enclosed burst, and a winged animal appeared, resplendent in all the effulgence of beauty, possessed of more refined faculties, and capable of higher enjoyments.

This transformation conveys to our minds a forcible representation of the change which will be produced on the body of man at the resurrection. "It is sown in corrup-

tion, it is raised in incorruption ; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power ; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory ; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." That body which is now subject to disease, decay, and corruption, will be raised immortal and incorruptible, endued with astonishing powers and activity, invested with endless youth, arrayed in glory and beauty, and capable of expatiating at large in the enjoyment of its exalted faculties. Divested of its earthly and corruptible constitution, it will be a fit mansion for the pure ethereal spirit, and both united, the happiness of the redeemed will be complete.

Had the seed of the woman not bruised the serpent's head, we know so far what consequence would have ensued. The penalty denounced against transgression, would, without mitigation, have been endured by Adam and his fallen posterity. The nature of this penalty we may in some degree understand, by contrasting it with the happiness enjoyed by Adam in innocence. As long as he continued in a state of obedience, he enjoyed life ; and in the day he gave proof of his rebellion by an outward action, which evinced the state of his mind, he lost his title to this life, and consequently became subject to death. The nature of this death may be ascertained by considering the nature of that life, which before transgression he enjoyed. His body, formed of the dust of the ground, was animated by the inspiration of the Almighty. " The Lord God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." This inspiration of the Eternal communicated immortality to his body, and to his soul not only immortality, but likewise the image of God, which constitutes what is termed spiritual life. The life of the body, therefore, consisted in its immortality, and that of the soul in its spirituality. These were necessarily connected with man's state in innocence, and consequently were forfeited by disobedience. So far the record of God's word leads us, but no farther, and any statement beyond this is mere conjecture, which, if

brought to the support of a system, proves that it rests on an uncertain foundation.

You say that "the death denounced by the law was just the separation of soul and body. This was the sentence on the whole race, and whilst it remained unreversed, it must have kept every man in his grave—it must have lain on every man like a tomb-stone—no one could have risen."* Confining my remarks at present to your opinion concerning the destiny of the body, I affirm that you have come to a decision without proof. We know not whether, if Christ had not died, the body which was the instrument in the act of transgression, would have finished its suffering at death, when the connection between it and the soul was dissolved. On this point revelation is silent, but from analogy it is reasonable to suppose, that the penalty would have been endured by soul and body united, as it will be by the wicked after the resurrection. Conjecture, however, is not proof, nor is it necessary for the support of our system, as it is for yours. Direct proof for your opinions you have not in the word of God, but from certain passages wrested from their true contextual meaning, you endeavour to establish your extravagant hypothesis.

Among other passages you quote 1 Corinthians xv. 22, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive." Some words and phrases, you are aware, are indefinite, and the extent of their application is ascertained from their general use, or from the particular manner in which they are applied by the bearing of the context. When you read concerning John's baptism, that "there went out unto him *all* the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were *all* baptised of him in the river Jordan,"† you never suppose that the term *all* is not limited, for to understand it in its full import would be to assert what in the nature of things could not happen. In like manner, when it is said that the Gospel "was preached to *every creature which is under hea-*

* Introductory Essay, &c. p. xlviii. † Mark i. 5.

ven,"* from a knowledge of facts you must conclude that the expression denotes only its extensive promulgation. In the present case, the extent of the application of the term *all* may be settled from the context, and from this it appears, that neither this passage, nor any of the others which you have quoted, contains the most distant proof, that if Christ had not died and risen again, the bodies of men would for ever have remained in the tomb. Throughout the whole of the fifteenth chapter the Apostle is speaking, not of the general resurrection, but of the resurrection of *believers only*. His epistle is addressed "to the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." Of these he says in the first verse, that they had received the gospel which he had preached unto them, and stood in it, and in the second verse he adds, "by which also ye are saved." The resurrection of the dead is spoken of in the 13th verse, but this may be explained by the 42d. "So also is the resurrection of the dead: it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory;" &c. What is here said of the dead, you must allow can refer only to the dead in Christ. By *the dead*, therefore, who are spoken of in this chapter, we are to understand *believers, and them alone*, and from this death they will be delivered, for "in Christ they shall all be made alive." There is no necessity for supposing that the indefinite term *all*, even in the former clause of this verse, is to be taken in its full import, as signifying every individual of the human race; for though it is an undeniable fact, that in consequence of Adam's transgression, death has passed upon *all men*, in the most unlimited sense of the expression, yet as the Apostle is, throughout the whole of the chapter, speaking of believers only, the train of his reasoning does not lead him to mention the

* Colossians i. 23.

mortality of the wicked as the effect of the first apostacy. His design seems to be to shew, that though believers, as well as others, became subject to death by the fall of Adam, yet by virtue of their union to Christ, they will be delivered from the effects of this death, and restored to a life more excellent than even that which Adam in innocence enjoyed. His words, I am convinced, may be paraphrased in the following manner, without departing from their legitimate meaning: "For as we believers suffer temporal death as well as the wicked, in consequence of our connection with Adam, our covenant head, and to shew our participation in the effects of his apostacy; so at the resurrection, in consequence of our connection with Christ, and to shew our participation in the benefits which he by his death has procured, we shall rise in a state of union to him; and enter on the enjoyment of life eternal." This, Sir, is the contextual meaning of the passage, which you vainly endeavour to wrest to the support of your opinion concerning the resurrection. What would have been the state of man had Christ not appeared in our world, I do not attempt to decide; it is sufficient for my purpose to shew, that the opinion you have adopted on the subject is unsupported by Scripture.

JUDGMENT.

MAN is so constituted, that the mere statement of any truth makes a more feeble impression on his mind, than the same truth exemplified in action. The declaration, for example, that a parent loves his offspring, is a truth, which, like an axiom of science, is taken for granted, without a process of reasoning. This fact, however, though unquestionable, never affects our minds so strongly as when proved by convincing and impressive actions. The declaration presented to our minds as a truth, readily gains our assent, but let this truth be embodied in expressive actions, and it not only gains our assent, but powerfully impresses our mind. A prodigal son, for example, may demand his inheritance, and, regardless of a father's feelings, retire to a distant land, and, thoughtless of the future, spend his substance in riotous living. The cheerful smile of the father exchanged for settled sadness—the burning tear rolling down his furrowed cheek—the importunate prayer again and again ascending to the throne of God for his son's repentance—his happiness on hearing of his return—his tears of joy—his running to meet, and embracing, and falling on the neck of his son—his ordering the servants to put a ring on his finger, and to bring for him the fairest robe—to kill the fatted calf, and to feast and make merry—are so many indications of a father's love, which more satisfactorily convince our understandings of the nature and extent of parental love, and impress our

hearts with a sense of its power, than a bulky volume of well-connected reasoning.

In every part of God's proceedings, the mind of man is impressed through the medium of actions, whether intended to illustrate his moral character, or to convince man of the propriety of his proceedings. This world could have been instantaneously heaved into existence, but in order to accommodate his proceedings to the capacity of man, God thought fit to perform the work of creation progressively, and to complete it in a certain portion of time. In Paradise, man was reminded of God's providence by sensible objects fitted to impress the heart. In man's first abode, all was beauty to the eye, music to the ear, and grateful to the taste. "Immortality breathed in the winds, flowed in the rivers, and exhaled from every plant and flower." In Redemption God appears in the endearing character of a father, surveying with paternal pity his fallen offspring; and in the commencement, continuance, and consummation of that great work, the love of God is illustrated by actions of the most impressive nature.

In the description we have in Scripture of the close of all things, every thing is so arrayed as to strike the mind with awe, and the general assize is so conducted, as forcibly to impress us with the conviction, that God is just and right in all his ways. The sun is covered with sackcloth—the moon is turned into blood—the stars of heaven fall from their orbs—and Nature, convulsed, tumbles into ruins. The trumpet sounds—the dead awake to life—the heavens are wrapped together like a scroll—the great white throne is set, and the Books of Heaven's record are opened. The Ancient of Days appears on the Judgment-seat, arrayed in awful majesty—countless myriads of seraphim and cherubim surround his throne—ten thousand times ten thousand minister before him. All nations, people, and languages, are sisted before the dread tribunal, and the actions of every man undergo a scrutinising review.

Such is the representation of Scripture; and to sup-

pose it merely figurative in accommodation to the weakness of our minds, is to suppose that in this case God will depart from his usual method of procedure with regard to man. An instantaneous *fiat* of the Creator could have called the universe into being; and by a simple act of power, likewise, all could receive sentence. The other parts of God's proceedings, however, are mentioned in detail as they actually occurred, and may we not conclude, that when a similar detail is given of the solemnities of the Judgment, God will act according to his usual method; and that as far as the mighty events of that day can be described in human language, we are furnished with this detail in the Scriptures.

The scene is closed—the wicked receive their awful sentence: “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels.” “What,” says Hall, “were it lawful to indulge such a thought, what would be the funeral obsequies of a lost soul? Where should we find tears fit to be wept at such a spectacle? Or could we realise the calamity in all its extent, what tokens of commiseration and concern would be deemed equal to the occasion? Would it suffice for the sun to veil his light, and the moon her brightness; to cover the sea with mourning, and the heavens with sackcloth; or were the whole fabric of Nature to become animated and vocal, would it be possible for it to utter a groan too deep, or a cry too piercing, to express the magnitude and extent of such a catastrophe?”

“Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Oh! the happiness of the Redeemed! Their bliss is eternal—their employment delightful and sublime. Their residence is too splendid even for the most glowing imagery. Of their happiness imagination cannot conceive, nor language express. Yea, though our eye has surveyed the most laboured efforts of art, and the still more stupendous productions of nature—though our ear has been entertained with the soothing sounds of harmony, and the still more powerful charm

of eloquence—though, by the power of imagination, advancing beyond the bounds of all created excellence, we could detach, collect, and arrange, the various beauties of nature and art, and all the pleasures and conveniences of life, without any circumstance to abate, period to terminate, or satiety to cloy; yet, vast as the range of any or all of these might be, they could afford not the most distant comparison to the happiness of the blessed in heaven; and as long as we remain bound to this terrestrial scene, we must rest satisfied with the conclusion of the Apostle: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

I have thought proper to defer my remarks on Spiritual Death till now, because your opinion on this subject has a direct connection with the final condemnation. There is more ingenuity in the manner in which you make the different parts of your system coalesce, than honest dealing in the means you employ for that purpose. You say that “men, by their traditions, have converted the penalty denounced by the law into a three-fold death—death temporal, death spiritual, and death eternal.”* The first of these has been already discussed; and with regard to spiritual death, you seem not so much to object to the thing itself, as to the words by which it is expressed, and the manner in which it is applied. “Death spiritual,” you say, “is nothing more or less than sin itself.” In this I conceive you are mistaken. You will acknowledge that man has sinned, and that in consequence he has lost spiritual life; in other words, that sin has produced a change, which has effaced God’s moral image from his heart. If so, then, man has not only sinned, but in his soul he suffers the *effects* of sin. Now, the cause—*sin*, is as different from the *effects* which it has produced

* Introd. Essay &c. page xlvii.

in the soul, as is the sun from the light which it produces. It is vain for you to confound what in the nature of things are different, and the old "*tradition*," so far as we have gone, is more correct than your confused jumble of cause and effect.

With regard to the third part of the "*tradition*," you say, that "death eternal is not a punishment under the law, but under the gospel;* and the condemnation at the last day, will be, not for having *broken the law*, but for having *rejected the gospel*."† Suppose, then, that your explanation of the death denounced by the law is correct, that is, "*just the separation of soul and body*;" in this state of separation, is the soul miserable or not? "*It has shut out God*," you say, "*and therefore must be miserable in its state of separation*." I am not sure if this misery has any resemblance to that described in the Bible under the most awful images. The fool wishes there was no God, and in this state of separation you grant him his desire. In your "*Remarks on the Internal Evidences for the truth of Revealed Religion*," you suppose that the punishment of the wicked in a future state, consists in their being brought into contact with the immaculate holiness of God, and that this, in proportion to their guilt, renders their state more intolerable. If, then, they could be removed altogether from God, and in your last publication you grant, that the soul, in a state of separation from the body, is shut out from God, this state of separation will be a very heaven to the wicked. Heaven to them would be misery, and what you suppose to be their punishment, would in reality be their utmost happiness. According to your theory, therefore, if no Saviour had been provided for our fallen race, the bodies of men would have remained for ever in the grave, and their souls would have lived in a separate state, suffering nothing but the being separated from the body, and shut out from God; circumstances which, to man under a curse, would have been most desirable.

* Introd. Essay, &c. page xlvi.

† Do. page xli.

This, however, is attending only to your view of the consequences of Spiritual Death, unconnected with Eternal Death—the third part of what you call a “*tradition*,” and dismiss as an error, without the trouble of refutation. Independently, however, of Scripture authority, to which I need not at present advert, eternal death is necessarily implied as a part of the punishment denounced by the law. What you stigmatise, therefore, as a *tradition*, is not a *tradition*, but a correct statement of circumstances connected with man, dividing itself into three parts, which, for the sake of distinction, have received the names, to which, without cause, you object. You say that the soul under the penalty, would, after the death of the body, have existed in a state of separation. This state you call sin, or spiritual death; and I ask you, would the soul, in this state of spiritual death, have undergone a change? If it would have undergone a change, this is exactly the doctrine of Universal Restoration, which makes your theory consistent; but if you admit that the soul would have remained for ever in this state of separation, or spiritual death, why may not the everlasting continuance of this spiritual death be denominated *eternal death*?

The propriety of the term *eternal death* could be proved much more effectually from Scripture, but as you merely wish to have it out of the way, because it interferes with your system, it is sufficient to shew its propriety notwithstanding your theory.

“At the last day,” you say, “men will not be condemned for breaking the law, but for rejecting the gospel.”* You settle, with great despatch, the much agitated question respecting the salvation of the Heathen. They have not rejected the gospel, and therefore, according to your system, cannot be condemned. Many of them, however, have lived in the grossest immorality, and are totally unfit for ming-

ling with the pure spirits who surround the throne of God. Into the heavenly Jerusalem "there shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they who are written in the Lamb's book of life." To make your theory consistent, therefore, you must suppose, either that they will be annihilated, or placed in some intermediate state of purification; suppositions alike contradictory to reason and Scripture. Paul decides satisfactorily on this subject: "For as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law.—For when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law; these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, who shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another."* God is not a hard master, he will not gather where he has not strewed; and therefore the heathen will not be condemned for rejecting a gospel which they have never heard, but they will be judged according to that law of nature which is written in their hearts, and condemned for their violation of that law.†

With regard to those who have heard the gospel message, your conclusion is equally erroneous. Had Adam continued obedient, his happiness would have been secured. As a matter of right he would not only have been exempted from punishment, but would have enjoyed the continuance of that happiness which was connected with his obedience. Having sinned, his punishment was necessarily connected with his transgression, and this punishment would undoubtedly have been for breaking the law. The promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, did not separate the connection between the penalty and the violation of the law. Had Adam not believed the promise, a broken

* Rom. ii. 12, 14, 15.

† See Rom. i. 18, to the end.

law would have required from him the infliction of the punishment. Embracing by faith the message given him by God, he was delivered from condemnation, and the dishonoured law was honoured by the obedience and death of the voluntary surety. As with Adam, so with his posterity. Your error on this subject may be traced to your attaching to the gospel ideas with which it has no connection. The gospel is a message of deliverance from the curse of a violated law, and you attach to it ideas which belong only to the law. If men could obey the law there would be no condemnation, but as its sanctions are violated, those who violate them must endure the consequences of their transgression. If the gospel is accepted, the demands of the law are satisfied by the surety, and the believer is delivered from punishment. If the gospel is not accepted, the law still remains in force, and, like a merciless creditor, it says with unrelenting severity: "Pay me that thou owest, or I will deliver thee over to the tormentors."

At the last day every man will be judged according to his works, and those who have not been justified by the all-perfect righteousness of Christ, will suffer the punishment of a violated law. Satan may accuse the brethren of many acts of transgression, and even believers themselves, comparing their lives with the law of God, which was their rule of duty, may find many defects in their conduct, but their daysman has given a satisfaction, to which even Satan, their malicious foe, cannot object. Christ thus honours his law by his own death for believers, and unbelievers must honour the law by enduring through eternity its awful penalties.

The wicked, therefore, are condemned for breaking the law, and their rejection of the gospel is not the *sole cause of their condemnation*, but the *cause why they did not escape condemnation*. Independently of the gospel they were under condemnation, and rejecting the gospel—the only means of deliverance, exposed them to that condemnation which resulted from the violation of a law, holy, just, and good.

I have now, Sir, brought this letter, which has extended to a much greater length than I anticipated, to a close. In the course of it, I have, either directly or indirectly, referred to your principal errors, and endeavoured, not only to vindicate "the Religion of the Land" from misrepresentation, but also to refute your erroneous opinions.

Many of your errors I have traced to a misapplication of language. The meaning of language you sufficiently understand, for your perversions of it prove that you know its legitimate use. You are acute enough in drawing distinctions, and deducing inferences, and the confusion you make in attaching to common terms ideas apart from sanctioned use, is of great importance for the support of your system. You pay no deference to the definitions given by Lexicographers,* but alter the meaning of the words you employ, so as best to suit your system. In your translations from

* A Dictionary formed on your principles of confounding language, would make an invaluable literary curiosity. As something of this kind may be required in order to enable your readers to understand your different publications, I shall give one or two specimens of the manner in which it might be conducted.

Holiness—the *place to which the spirits of the redeemed go after death*. In Scripture it is generally called by the synonymous word, *heaven*. For a magnificent description of this *place*, see Revelation chap. xxi.

Spiritual Death—*sin*.—Example. "He that committeth *spiritual death* is of the Devil, for the Devil *dieth spiritually* from the beginning." 1 John iii. 8.

Repentance—*faith*. To repent—to *believe*.—Example. "Without *repentance* it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must *repent* that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Heb. xi. 6.

Salvation—a *cure*—*obedience*.—Examples. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of a *cure*?" Heb. i. 14.—"Receiving the end of your *faith*, even the *obedience* of your souls." 1 Peter i. 9.

the Greek you proceed on the same principle, and wrest to the support of your opinions passages which contain sentiments of a very different kind.*

In perusing this letter, you may sometimes meet with a repetition of the same ideas. To avoid this was impossible. You confound thought and language so much, that it was a matter of some difficulty, in considering your system, to keep a distinction on points which you intentionally combine. The Gospel is distinctly branched out into parts, intimately connected; and what I have discussed in several parts, you combine into one, and therefore, from the very nature of the case, a repetition, apparent at least, was unavoidable.

I may say with Paschal, "If I had had more leisure, the book, small as it is, would have been smaller." There would have been a compression in the statements, as well as in the language. There are in your system a few leading peculiarities, which being discussed, the others are inferences from them, and therefore do not demand a formal refutation. For example, when your opinions of the nature of justifying faith are proved to be contrary to Scripture; it might be taken for granted that your opinions of personal assurance are likewise unfounded. This method, however, would not have shewn fully the peculiarities of your system;

* Some of your female friends have expressed to me a strong desire to learn Greek, but I fear, the study would be rather too tedious for their volatile spirits. Besides, they would require such an assortment of screws, racks, pincers, and other instruments of torture, in order to twist the words of inspiration into accordance with your theories, that the labour would not be agreeable to sensitive ladies, nor easy to those who are *careful for nothing*. Perhaps, however; they may attain their wish, in the expeditious manner in which they pretend to have been enabled to speak and write the modern Oriental languages. If so—in the march of wonders, they must mount a Pegasus, and fly with incalculable speed from pole to pole, to astonish the world with their miraculous endowments.

and the broad basis which I have taken, though in some respects objectionable, has at least this advantage, that it presents a full view of your opinions, and affords the means of refuting your varied phraseology on each particular topic of discussion.

For the defects of the production my apology may not be sufficient. The style is not uniform, and in some places an ease may be discerned, where intensity of thought, and aptness of illustration, might have been expected. It is the produce of short snatches of time, and the greater part of it was written when mind and body were exhausted by labours most unfavourable both to vigorous thinking, and elegance of expression. What the mind, therefore, furnished at the call, meets the eye; and what has been produced in haste, may be perused at leisure.

I will not presume to give you an advice, but you will allow me to present you with my wishes. There is an unction about your writing, admirably adapted for practical subjects; and could you forget your doctrinal peculiarities, and produce works which all might read, instead of turning the heads of our good dames, you might reform their hearts, and lead them to think more on the all-important subjects of death, judgment, and eternity. It might not, perhaps, gratify an ambitious mind to be confined to the plainness of practical writing; but, Sir, in a dying hour, when terrestrial objects are fading from the view, and the realities of an unseen world engage the thoughts, it would surely afford a pleasure worthy the ambition of a Christian, to think, that even when dead, you could speak to the hearts of the giddy and the irreligious.

You suppose that those who differ from you in opinion are without hope—believe in a false gospel—and are dreaming on in a delusive peace. The charity, however, which you wish not to cultivate, I delight to indulge. Minds are as various as the human countenance; circumstances, too, affect men's opinions; yet even in this variety there may be much of vital godliness among persons who have very differ-

ent views concerning some subjects ;—nay, it may even be necessary for the effect and purity of religion, that diversity of opinion should prevail. May we not, therefore, be travelling on the same road, though our sentiments cannot harmonise? May we not mutually indulge in Christian sympathies, though we strenuously defend our opinions? May not kind feelings be allowed to circle round the heart, towards our opponents in argument, while at the same time we employ every weapon against the principles of those whom we suppose to have erred from the faith once delivered to the saints? Earnestness in the defence of truth is not incompatible with kindly feelings. In the character of the beloved John we may observe the most endearing tenderness of disposition combined with the utmost ardour and zeal in his Master's cause. In the defence of truth, how zealous and unbending—in addressing mankind, how tender and affectionate, so much so, indeed, that if we may credit history, the same Apostle who was all fire when the honour of his Master was concerned, frequently repeated these words to the followers of God, “ My little children, love one another.” Amiable Apostle! How unbending for truth, and desirous to promote love and harmony among mankind! Were thy example followed, heresy ashamed would hide its head, and the voice of contention be hushed for ever among the sons of men. A Boanerges in the cause of truth, thou didst resemble the thunder bursting from the surcharged clouds; but in exhorting mankind to duty, in the tenderness of affection thy voice softened into the meltings of love.

You may push me aside as unworthy to accompany you in the narrow way to Zion, but while I hold fast my integrity, and state your mistakes, I still look on you as a fellow-traveller, though ignorant of some windings of the road. But though your movements may be zigzag, and though you misname the stages in our progress, I firmly believe that your face is Zion-ward. You study the right map of the way, and wish to follow its directions; but, indulging

prepossessions, your scale is defective, you confound marks, and trouble yourself and your companions with countless mistakes.

The journey of life will soon be over; and though we cannot agree in sentiment here, may I not fondly cherish the pleasing anticipation of having you for a companion in those scenes of bliss, the very thought of which gladdens the believer's heart in this vale of tears—scenes, the anticipation of which, from their importance and tranquillising effect, should hush the voice of contention, and banish from the breast the ill effects of religious controversy, which has a tendency to deaden the kindly affections, and quench the flame of genuine devotion?

The vision of the past will soon be closed. Yet a short time, and the earth will close upon our ashes, and the grass spring up over our tombs. Soon will the trumpet sound, and the Judge be seated on his throne. The solemnities of the Judgment over, the wicked are consigned to a place where hope is unknown, and the righteous enter upon the enjoyment of bliss, which imagination cannot conceive, nor language express. How noble the employment of the redeemed in heaven! The thought is rapture, and in the high anticipation may we not mutually indulge, as in the reality I fondly hope we will mutually participate?

To the redeemed, disencumbered of their clayey tabernacles, their mental vision brightened, and every faculty strengthened, the study of the works of God will probably be one source of sublime and rational enjoyment in heaven. At the final consummation, when the earth and all that is therein shall be burned up, we have no reason to suppose that any other planet than our globe will fall from its orbit. The sun covered with sackcloth, the moon turned into blood, the stars of heaven fleeing away, are awfully descriptive of the appearance of things, when time shall toll the funeral knell of the planet we inhabit. In one grand blaze, the elements of our earth may dissolve in fervent heat, while this catastrophe may not affect the rest of the universe.

Unmoved, the sun may retain his place in the centre of the system; the planets continue their revolutions in solemn round; and the fancied music of the spheres be unharmoured by our globe crackling in rapid combustion.

Allowing this thought to be correct, which appears to be substantiated by reason, and not contradicted by Scripture, what a field of contemplation opens to engage the attention of the redeemed in heaven. The discoveries of modern times have presented to our view millions of suns, the centres of systems similar to our own. The contemplation of these is one of the most sublime employments which can occupy the mind of man. How delightful the thought, that space is peopled with intelligent beings; and that when the ashes of this world, scattered through the void, shall be attracted by other planets, its annihilation in the universe will be as unimportant, as is to our globe the disappearance of the smallest island which rears its head amidst the waves of the ocean.

Assisted by the telescope, while in midnight vigils we watch the revolutions of planets—survey suns which irradiate their systems—and, from the analogy of science, allow imagination to wing its way through immensity—calculation is set at defiance, the mind becomes overpowered with the grandeur of its conceptions, and, astonished, bursts out into a song of admiration: “Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty.” Well has it been said, “An undevout astronomer is mad,” for the subjects which this delightful science furnish for contemplation, are well fitted to arrest the attention, excite admiration, and produce praise.

Disencumbered in heaven of those earthly bodies by which they were clogged, the redeemed, with all their powers renewed, roaming at large through space—their speed like that of angels, which time counts not,—and their vision glancing with the rapidity of thought, from system to system,—will contemplate countless myriads of worlds suspended from the throne of God, moving harmoniously, and,

amidst all the wandering mazes of planets, satellites, and comets, never be lost in perplexity.

Oh! how must such a contemplation encrease our admiration of that Being who spoke creation into existence; who sits behind the elements of his own formation; unwearied by the immensity of his works, and unperplexed by their variety. If but to guess the laws of Nature made a Newton immortal, how delightful and satisfying must be the employment of tracing the laws by which Deity regulates the motions of the different orbs which constitute the universe, and makes them, in solemn silence, perform their revolutions. Absorbed in thought, the capacious soul of Newton grasped immense calculations, which bewilder expansive intellects, but his powers having now reached their manhood, these calculations, with their results, will appear to him like the *sums* which engage the attention of the *Tyro*, and, without an effort, will now be comprehended by an intuitive glance.

The character of God as displayed in his providential dealings towards man, will also form a source of the most delightful contemplation to the redeemed in heaven. Here we live in a cloudy region, and endowed with a mental vision which but obscurely traces the past, and dimly surveys the future. Clouds and darkness surround the throne of God; and to our limited discernment, his proceedings are often inexplicable, and sometimes even opposed to what we consider rectitude. In his providence, God often moves in a mysterious way, performing wonders. Often do we see the wicked flourishing like a green bay-tree, and "bearing their blushing honours thick upon them;" while the righteous are depressed, and go heavily along, under the pressure of many and severe trials.

Afflictions here often seem chastisements without any apparent end. In heaven they will appear to have been blessings in disguise—the corrections of a loving, kind, and tender parent—the means appointed by God for working out for believers a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory. Here the believing mother, astonished at God's

dealings, refuses to be comforted, because her child is not. Blooming in health and beauty, Death with ruthless hand has crushed the flower of her fond hopes and pleasing anticipations, and caused it to droop and die, like a tender plant, when trodden under foot by the unheeding traveller. Bedewing the uncrimsoned cheek and the whitened lip, with the tears which in succession drop from her brim-full eye, as she takes the last parting embrace of her beloved child, about to be conveyed to the cheerless mansions of the tomb; in such a painful moment, affection is almost tempted to charge God foolishly, and to doubt the wisdom of his providential dispensations. In heaven no such doubts will perplex the mind. The darling of her hopes was perhaps usurping an undue ascendancy over her affections, and "God, to save the mother, took the child;" or perhaps in compassion he plucked this flower from his earthly garden, lest its spiritual growth should be marred by tares of the enemy's sowing, and transplanted it to a happier clime, where, fostered by the genial rays of the sun of righteousness, it might flourish and bloom for ever in the paradise of God.

Comparing the history of individuals in this world, we are sometimes apt, from apparent circumstances, to question the wisdom and justice of that administration which allots to every one his particular station. The hollow-hearted sycophant, basking in the sunshine of prosperity, and strutting along with the pompous gait of assumed importance, is allowed sometimes to usurp unmerited authority over his more noble-minded, but less fortunate brother. One aspirant for literary honours, almost blind with midnight study, is allowed to climb his arduous way up the steep ascent of fame, unassisted, unbefriended, and alone; while another, less talented, but more fortunate, is cheered along, and lifted up to the pinnacle of his wishes, by influential friends; and in pedantic consequence, assumes an importance which his station may allow, but which his merits do not authorise. In the walk of life, one man, possessed of a mind of the

finest mould, and the strongest grasp of intellect, is frequently doomed to drudge out existence, earning a scanty pittance, eating the bread of sorrow, covered with dust, and sweating with toil; while the mere play-thing of fortune, a nonentity in thought, is charioted along in splendid state, and from his roll of associates, can read the names of the wise, the mighty, and the noble of the land.

To the redeemed in heaven, all the intricacies of Providence will be unravelled; they will be enabled to discern why God has thus allowed one to prosper, and suffered another to endure penury and woe; and the discovery of the end which God had in view in his providential movements will force from them the confession, that all things have been done well and wisely.

It is principally, however, from a contemplation of the great work of Redemption; that the saints in bliss will have cause to celebrate, in songs of adoring praise, the character of their heavenly Father. If the work of Redemption appears so great to believers, from the historical detail given of it in the Bible, what magnitude must it assume to the redeemed in heaven. With faculties weak, and information limited, we can at present have but a faint conception of its greatness; but even under such circumstances, it is overpowering to the minds of believers. With what feelings, therefore, must the redeemed contemplate this work, harmonising so admirably the moral attributes of God—employing agents so illustrious—overcoming enemies so powerful—and providing for the sons of men the enjoyment and continuance of such inestimable blessings. Tracing the greatness of this work, not merely from historical detail, but from an exhibition of the facts as they occurred, from the commencement of Redemption to its final termination;—not with faculties weak and erring, but with minds strong in their conception, expansive in their flights, and correct in their conclusions—the redeemed will be able to comprehend every circumstance which constitutes this unspeakable manifestation of God's love—indeed a great work.

In contemplating the work of Redemption from the historical detail given of it in the Bible, we find ourselves in the midst of facts too astonishing for comprehension, and now endeavouring to assimilate our minds to the mental state of those who sing the song of Moses and the Lamb around the throne of God, we find our imaginations too feeble for their expansive flights, our understandings too weak to grasp their ideas, and their words, though heard in our present imperfect state, unutterable. Oh ! that we had wings like a dove, that we might soar above this cloudy region, and reach the rest prepared for the people of God. But our heavenly Father best knows when to call us hence. We have here our several duties to perform, and let us, in the strength of God, so perform these, that, when we are called to bid adieu to life, we may enjoy the well-grounded hope of a blessed immortality. It is but a few days since a devoted servant of God in this place was called away in the midst of a life of ministerial usefulness. Living a life of faith in the Son of God, of unassuming piety, and of ardent zeal in his Master's cause, his whole deportment was a practical display of the power of genuine and vital godliness. Having poured out his soul in fervent prayer to his heavenly Father, in that house in which he had for many years faithfully proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation, the hand of God was suddenly laid upon him, and he received the summons to repair from the temple below to the temple above. Casting a farewell glance at a beloved relative, his spirit meanwhile hovering between earth and heaven, with the tender sympathies of nature circling round his breast, and the brightening glories of the heavenly Jerusalem bursting on his astonished view, he exclaimed in the language of triumphant faith, "ALL IS WELL!" How tender! How sublime!—More he uttered not, and more he required not to utter, for the archangel was already holding out for him the crown of glory, and the palm of victory,—the seraph was already preparing for him the golden harp, and in a few hours his spirit was before the throne of God, swelling in

angelic strains the praises of his Redeemer.—“**MARK THE PERFECT MAN, AND BEHOLD THE UPRIGHT, FOR THE END OF THAT MAN IS PEACE.**” Who, in contemplating such a glorious triumph of faith, would not utter the earnest prayer, “*Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.*”

Surely such a scene is well fitted to hush the petty jarrings of contention, and to inspire our souls with that Christian charity which animates the glorified spirits above. That we may both follow them who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises, and, when the storms of life are past, meet in a better and happier region, is the sincere prayer of,

SIR,

Your servant in Christ Jesus,

A. ROBERTSON.

BOARDING ESTABLISHMENT, }
Glebe, Greenock, May 1830. }

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

REFERRED TO AT PAGE 45.

EDUCATION.

DOCTRINAL errors necessarily lead to errors in practice. Some time ago, I heard the Rev. Mr. Campbell of Row state from the pulpit, that the children of this country were trained up in a spirit of selfishness, and, by the motives for exertion which were presented to their minds, were prepared to embrace a religion, the spirit of which was pure selfishness. On the subject of Education there has always been great diversity of opinion, and from the nature of the subject, uniformity cannot be expected. There are circumstances connected with it as with medicine, which in some degree enable every man to form a theory of his own, and consequently there must be variety of opinion, arising not unfrequently from ignorance, inexperience, or caprice. Every man is in some degree his own physician, and what he can do, in ordinary circumstances, in his own case, vanity or interest may make him offer to do, under any circumstances, to those who may be the dupes of his pretensions. Hence, while the judicious administration of medicine requires talents of no ordinary kind, as well as long experience; from the circumstances connected with the pro-

fession, quackery in it has become proverbial ; and the man who, from lengthened experience and a careful digest of theories, can adapt his prescriptions to the ever-varying circumstances of his patients, is not unfrequently mortified by the interference and obtrusive presumption of the ignorant. As in medicine, so in education. Almost every person has spent some portion of his time in acquiring knowledge, and being directly or indirectly connected with education, which is a subject of general interest, every one has his own peculiar views of it, and wishes to have them adopted, however vague and undefined.

The end to be accomplished in education is the point on which the greater part fix their attention ; and if this does not equal their anticipations, the means employed are supposed to be defective. The character and talents of the subjects of education, are, owing to partiality and prejudice, seldom duly considered ; and as a patient who forgets his bad habit of body, from a change of medicine only finds disappointment, so when the means employed in education are not efficacious, a change of plan is expected to produce what in the nature of things can never be effected. From the operation of these and many other causes, every new system is received with applause, till the discovery of its defects prepares the way for its being supplanted by another in rapid succession. Quacks in medicine can heal every disease by a few simples. The disease must accommodate itself to the prescription, and not the prescription to the disease. In education, likewise, theories are formed, and supposed to be applicable to the endless variety of characters and dispositions to which they may be applied. A quack may succeed in the application of his medicine by mere chance, from a happy agreement between the disease of his patient, and his prescription ; and a theory may be successfully acted on in one case, which in another may prove totally inefficient. Minds are more various than diseases, and the methods employed in order to train youth with success, must be accommodated to circumstances, with no less

care than that which a skilful physician exercises in adapting his prescriptions to the state of his patient.

The methods employed in every department of education are various from necessity, and ever fluctuating from a variety of causes. The application of plans must be modified to existing circumstances, and what is proper at one time, and in one place, may be very improper at another period; and in another place, when the circumstances are different. One great cause of the fluctuation of plans in teaching is inexperience. A zealous teacher is ever active in expedients, and restless in experiments, till he can give a decided preference in favour of some system. Arrived at this conclusion, he compares his former plans with those he has adopted, and comes to a decision, which is, in the most of cases, improper—that what *works well* with *him*, cannot fail in any place where it is adopted. Circumstances are forgot, and the plan alone revolves in his mind. According to the degree of his influence will be the changes which he may produce in the plans of others; and as *the many* are ever under leaders, the *manner* of teaching has always been, and always will be, changeable. The inexperience, however, of men *not of the profession*, is the greatest cause of the changes which are daily taking place. A system may be beautiful in theory, which fails in practical effect. In every system of teaching there is much that is unpleasant, both to the teacher and the taught, and the theorist, in his closet, attempts to remedy this supposed defect, by considering in private, what he does not understand from experience, and recommends a plan which may be pleasant in theory, but cannot be rendered efficient in the class-room.

Infant schools, as moral nurseries, are, under certain circumstances, commendable; but as places of education, not an idea can be acquired, which could not be communicated with double advantage, at a more advanced period. Those theorists who would teach youth nothing till they attain the age of ten or twelve, have adopted an extreme perhaps even more objectionable.—The Lancastrian mode of education;

on account of the general diffusion of endowed schools, and the low charge for instruction to the labouring classes, is not required in Scotland, and hence it has generally failed. The Edinburgh Sessional School system is, when properly conducted, admirably calculated for conveying information, and producing habits of activity; but the same presiding spirit who has given to it notoriety, would, by his *aptness* to teach, render any adopted system efficient. The same system modified, and combined with Fulton & Knight's simplified, is most efficient for training the youth of the respectable classes of society, where time is allowed for forming the manner, as well as improving the mind.—The interrogative system is not to be entirely superseded by the intellectual mode of Sir Richard Phillips. If the latter method gives more activity to the mind, it has a tendency to produce confusion; whereas the former has at least the advantage of regularity, and the two combined, are in some cases necessary to produce a proper acquaintance with the object of study.—In Arithmetic and the Mathematics, exercise individually and by classes, is required; and application by rule is as necessary as the habit of mental exertion. The method adopted by Ascham in the tuition of Queen Elisabeth, and recommended by Locke—the Hamiltonian—and “Dufief's Nature displayed,” have all been successfully adopted under peculiar circumstances, but in general they are unfit for systematic education, and the plan usually followed is better for exercising the mind, and more beneficial in its ultimate results.

In religious education it is necessary both to inform the mind, and affect the heart. Formal addresses should seldom be given, and when ventured, they should be short, and adapted to the taste and capacities of children. Instruction by addresses is more pleasant to the instructor. If the instructor is a lay-man, it gives him something of clerical dignity; and if a clergyman, it accords with the range of feeling into which his mind has necessarily been turned, so that there is a tendency to carry it to excess. It is, how-

ever, far less useful to the instructed than even committing of tasks, and still less efficacious for bringing the mind into contact with religious truth, than instruction by the Edinburgh Sessional School books, Barrow's Questions, Gall's Catechisms, and other Books of religious instruction.—The fact is: in instruction of every kind, variety and an adaptation to circumstances are essential, and the intelligent instructor will make himself acquainted with every method, and, dropping the extravagance of each, will select what is proper, and apply it judiciously, according to the circumstances which affect himself, and those under his care.

It is undoubtedly true that youth should chiefly study those things which may be of more immediate use to them in after life; but as the various dealings of God towards his people are intended to train them for those employments which will engage them in another state of existence, so the exercises in which well-trained youth are engaged, are not prescribed so much for their own intrinsic value, as for their tendency to open the mind, strengthen the intellect, and improve the reasoning faculties, and thus fit them to discharge satisfactorily the duties to which they may be called on entering society. The exertion necessarily required for the performance of the prescribed exercises, gives to the mind intensity of application, and habits of diligence, which are absolutely necessary for every one, whatever station he may afterwards be destined to occupy. Many, for instance, who in their youth have studied the Mathematics or learned languages, have never had occasion, in their future employments, to exercise these branches of literature; but the mental training which was undergone in acquiring them, has been of incalculable advantage in various respects. It has refined their sentiments, strengthened their mental faculties, given them intensity of thought and habits of application, and thus enabled them to engage with vigour and resolution in the duties of their respective stations. Were these advantages duly appreciated, the training of the youthful mind would be more attended to in Education than it

generally is; and the expansiveness of intellect which it produces would be an ample reward for the additional labour and expense required in its accomplishment. This remark may be applied, not only in the case of young gentlemen, but also in the case of ladies, whose mental energies are generally destroyed by a superficial education. Gold lies deep—Miss will seldom dig, and Mamma sends her to the gilder; and forth she comes in due time, finished—an attractive statue, a Venus-catchfly, prepared to “shine in the ball, and sparkle in the ring,” and to add one to that thoughtless number, who dance through life in a round of giddy pleasures, “apparently forgetful that they are reasonable beings, accountable for their conduct while in this probationary state, and formed for an endless progression in perfection and felicity.”

Mr. Campbell's theory, however, has a reference, not to the *manner* of instruction, but to the means employed in order to produce exertion. He wishes exertion to spring entirely from love to education, and to banish emulation from the system. The motives for exertion may be reduced to three—Love, Emulation, and Fear. Every thing which can, in education, be gained by love, should be attempted. It is a principle of action recognised in Scripture, and in certain cases powerful in its effects. It is the most disinterested of all feelings, and humanises while it improves. If this principle is in operation, it will of itself be a sufficient excitement to exertion, and particularly if it combines love for the instructor with love for the instructions received. In religious instruction, this feeling should, if possible, predominate, and in some cases no other auxiliary may be required.

Some children are naturally of an amiable disposition, and so easily impressed with a sense of duty, that knowledge to them is nearly a sufficient reward for labour. They love their books and their instructor. And if the friend, instructor, and parent, are combined, how easy and how pleasant the duty of rearing a willing child in the paths of knowledge and virtue. Then,

“ Delightful task ! to rear the tender thought ;
 To teach the young idea how to shoot ;
 To pour the fresh instruction o’er the mind ;
 To breathe the enlivening spirit, and to fix
 The generous purpose in the glowing breast.”

Love, as a principle of action, is recognised in Scripture in God’s dealings towards his children, and hence we may conclude that it is proper likewise in the training of youth.—
 “ Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.* “ The love of Christ constraineth us.”†

Characters of this description, however, are rare. Some are sanctified from their early youth, and these are like innocents in paradise, compared with the generality of children. The end of instruction is what children cannot comprehend, and their minds are naturally occupied with what gives present enjoyment. When love, therefore, fails, the end must be gained by other means which are put in our power. Emulation is a powerful excitement to exertion and frequently produces astonishing effects. It is not, as many have represented it, a base and sordid feeling, but a principle of action deeply imprinted in the breast by nature, and found to be strongest in the noblest and most generous minds. It is, besides, recognised in Scripture. The great Apostle of the Gentiles made use of it even in the conversion of sinners, and is not this sufficient authority for our employing it for the purpose of education ? “ I speak,” says he, “ to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office ; if by any means I may *provoke to emulation* them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.”† Again, in speaking to the believers at Corinth, he says, “ I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago ; and your faith hath provoked very

* 1 Cor. x. 31. † 2 Cor. v. 14. ‡ Rom. xi. 13, 14.

many. Yet have I sent the brethren, lest our boasting of you should be in vain on this behalf; that, as I have said, ye may be ready: lest haply if they of Macedonia come with me, and find you unprepared, we, that we say not ye, should be ashamed in this same confident boasting.”*

A child is known by his doings; and in some breasts indifference, folly, or obstinacy, may be the predominant feeling. The application of the means in our power must be made with prudence, and though the result may never be satisfactory, the fault lies in the subject, and not in the means employed. If a child *does* possess talent, it *must* be excited by love; or if that feeling makes no impression, emulation may rouse the dormant faculties. If this also fails, force may produce a change, and the habits of application being acquired, they may settle into regular exertion. Stubbornness of every kind *must* be overcome by force, and if this feeling is not subdued, a hardihood of character may gradually be acquired, which is directly opposed to every mental exertion, and which may finally lead to no ordinary degree of depravity.

This is, however, the last resource, and should, like a powerful medicine, be judiciously administered, else, instead of subduing, it will only prove the means of producing sullenness and obstinacy of disposition. Every chastisement should appear the result of necessity, that he who endures it may be sensible of his fault, and love the one by whom he is chastened, while he is led to detest the cause of his chastisement. Violence, in inflicting punishment, is misapplied, and indeed, if irritation of temper produces commotion in the frame, fear may be caused in the breast of the offender, but when this is over, he is deterred from committing a similar offence merely by the feeling of terror. A strong sense of duty ought to compel a parent to punish, and thus, with affection circling in his breast, in calm dig-

* 2 Cor. ix. 2, 3, 4.

nity heaving the sigh, while the tear starts in his eye, will be gain his end by punishment, and secure at once the obedience and love of his child.

Punishment should never be inflicted for want of capacity, and seldom for unfortunate accidents, or even moral delinquency. To punish for want of capacity, will only increase stupidity, and besides, as an action, it is morally wrong. Accidents may occur, and in these there should always be an obvious distinction made between those which arise from recklessness, and those which spring from an evil disposition. In cases of moral delinquency, the offender should be dealt with as a rational and immortal being.—The nature of his offence should be laid before him; the injury he has done to himself, and the pain he has caused to those whom he ought to love, represented in their strongest colours; but above all, his mind should be subdued into softness by the consideration that he has offended that Being to whom he owes his existence, and all his comforts, and to whose long-suffering goodness it is owing that his crime has not been immediately followed by some signal mark of displeasure. In such cases, punishment has generally a bad effect, as it makes the offender suppose that the punishment inflicted upon him is an equivalent for the crime he has committed, and that by enduring the one, he has for the other made ample satisfaction.

Stubbornness is the chief fault which requires the infliction of punishment, and this feeling is more prevalent among youth than is generally supposed. It assumes a variety of forms, and seldom rises to hardened stubbornness. The fall of man proceeded from pride of disposition, and as this principle leads to independence of character, it is amazing in how many methods particularly the obstinately dull and the talented youth endeavour to *have their own way*.—Every attempt of this kind is a species of stubbornness, and should be instantly checked by a punishment proportioned to the strength of the principle operating, and producing indifference, aversion, or contempt.

Were these things duly considered, the man of irritable feelings would watch the outbreakings of his temper, and the whining sensibility of the inexperienced would be silenced. Punishment in the abstract is revolting to the sensitive mind, and forgetting that the demands of duty are imperative, sensibility too often usurps the place of matured experience, and gives a foolish decision. The inexperienced bachelor, and the fond parent delighted with the lisps of a child and heir, think of training children as if they were yet in paradise. When the Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go," it reminds the parent of the auxiliaries in his power, and if love fails, and emulation cannot gain the desired end, he must contend against flesh and blood. "He that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."* "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying."† It is somewhat remarkable that punishment in the training of children is expressly enjoined in Scripture, while the other two principles, viz: love and emulation, can only be proved by induction.

In training children another principle of action is sometimes improperly called into exercise, that is, *their own will*. Perhaps there is not a more foolish remark than that which is often made, "a child will lead, but not drive." If a child is under proper management, he will have confidence in those to whom he is intrusted for instruction, and *their will*, not *his own*, will be the motive of his exertion. If they *drive* him into exertion, if wisely done, it will not be by blind force, from momentary irritation or capricious tyranny, but from a reason understood, and necessarily acted on from love, duty, and a desire of his ultimate advantage. When his exertion is left to his own whim, being unable to connect the means necessary to gain the desired end, present gratification will give greater pleasure than exertion connected

* Proverbs xiii. 24. † xix. 18.

with future advantage, and if his own will is allowed to be a rule even in the most trifling case, it will gradually produce in him habits of insubordination. The yielding of an easy-minded mother prepares a stubborn youth to try a father's firmness, renders him unfit for the class-room, and subjects a teacher of refined mind and acute sensibility, to torturing anxiety, in endeavouring to eradicate principles, which every day are gaining additional strength, from habits of successful resistance against legitimate authority; and hence a *spoiled child* is troublesome to manage, and his progress is discreditable to his instructors, and unsatisfying to his parents.

The means employed in Education do not necessarily produce the end designed. In one case they may be completely successful, and in another entirely fail. In literature the means cannot give ability, and in religious instruction knowledge may be communicated without having a sanctifying influence on the heart. The better the mode of instruction, however, the greater the probability of success in most cases, but in unsuccessful instruction under the best means, the result sometimes makes inveterate dunces, and prepares for excess in moral turpitude. Either in literature or in religious instruction, the mind, if not improved, has a tendency to deteriorate. Feelings gradually gain strength, which by degrees usurp the ascendancy. Hence the unwilling scholar, goaded to duty, has a tendency to become more and more insensible to shame, and averse to labour; and when freed from exertion which excited disgust, he enters the world with an aversion to application, and is in a worse state than one who has not been placed under the same means of instruction. He has so often resisted, that resistance has settled into a confirmed habit, and has connected with it other feelings which may have no small influence in fixing his future destiny.

In religious training, this effect is still more conspicuous. The heart that is not softened by religious instruction, is hardened. The light may become darkness, and even great

darkness. The children of pious parents do not, in general, "depart from the way that they should go," but in some cases they have a peculiar tendency to go astray, and when led aside from the path of duty, they sometimes prove monsters of depravity. This is the natural effect of their excellent training, as in many natural things, the greater the blessing, the greater is the curse when diverted from their legitimate purpose. A boy well trained is necessarily more or less ignorant of the world, and there is in him an ingenuousness of disposition, which gives an engaging openness to his countenance, and an indescribable simplicity to his mode of expression. Ushered hastily into the companionship of others of irregular habits, in proportion to his talents will be the struggle in his mind to assimilate his character to that of his new associates. From inexperience he will overact his part, and at home his outwardly good conduct, being the result of habit, may not appear to be much changed; while, in endeavouring to unite virtue and vice, he may be rapidly carried down the stream of wickedness, and in a short time even commit actions which his hardened associates would not attempt. A godly jealousy, therefore, should be exercised over a well-trained youth on his entering society, lest his education for immortality, prove at his very outset, the means of making him a more easy prey to the seductions of artful knaves.

The delinquencies of those who go far aside from the path of virtue, may be traced to two causes. If the mind never was in unison with moral training, and aversion was gaining strength in the mind, which only waited for an opportunity of showing itself in all its deformity, the instructions have been perverted into feelings of the most debasing kind, and the heart, hardening under them like clay exposed to the sun, may break, but will not yield. Every thing serious is a weariness to the flesh, and the corrupt heart pants for freedom, which being obtained, and the principles of enmity to every thing that is good being allowed an opportunity to operate, the young delinquent may proceed to no ordinary degree of wickedness.

Again, if conscience was at one time shrinkingly alive to a sense of duty, and the march of vice has commenced, it may proceed at a rapid pace, from the mere circumstance of the conscience struggling between virtue and vice, and vice gaining the ascendancy, rejoices in its victory, and may lead to daring acts of wickedness. Although education, however, in some cases leads to excess in wickedness, from circumstances which can easily be traced, and satisfactorily accounted for; this is no more an argument against its general utility, than it would be against that of fire, to contend, that though of incalculable benefit in general, it sometimes produces the most disastrous consequences.

The great cause of error in theories on education, is a desire to trace to one cause what is properly the result of a combination of causes. In the most of cases, exertion must be produced, neither exclusively by love, emulation, nor fear.—It is the result of the three principles combined, and more or less of each of them may predominate according to circumstances. It has long been a favourite idea of mine, that the Bible not only gives us the best precepts for training youth, but also instructs us by striking examples. Mr. Campbell may not like to be taught from the class-room, but as a minister of the gospel, he may listen to the instructions of the great Parent.

We are all the children of God by creation, and in this view, he is as the parent of a great family. In his individual teaching, we see him calling into action a combination of principles. David acknowledged God as his teacher, and in his history, we view him alternately won by kindness, stimulated by reward, and punished severely for disobedience. So on a larger scale with the children of Israel.—In their deliverance from Egypt, their wanderings in the wilderness, and their establishment in the land of promise, these combined principles are in regular operation, and according to circumstances, God smiles, encourages, or smites. In his dealings towards men in general, we see the same principles exemplified. In the meltings of love he endea-

vours to soften and allure ; by awful terrors to persuade to duty ; and even in chastisement he acts as a wise parent.

The Christian parent and teacher, therefore, who takes the Bible for his rule, is in the way of duty, whatever may be the result. The theories of the ignorant may annoy him, and cause uneasiness in his mind, but the man of his counsel will be a light to his feet, and a lamp to his path. Thinking on the dealings of his heavenly Father towards him, and being taught even in his own personal history by unerring wisdom, he will be enabled to train up those whom God has committed to his charge. Unsuccessful he may be, and, his fondly cherished hopes blasted, futurity darkened, and the cup of anticipated enjoyment dashed untasted from his lips, he may, from the mental inquietude caused by the perverseness of his children, pass the night in tossings to and fro, wishing for the dawning of the day, and when it arrives, the sight of the rebellious child, over whom he has watched, and wept, and prayed, may only renew the intensity of his feelings, till, surcharged, they find vent in sighs and tears. Is he culpable although his exertions have proved abortive? The Bible reminds him of the Spirit vexed, grieved, and about to retire from the stubborn sons of men ;—shows him the Saviour of the world in a flood of tears, saying, “ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not ! Behold your house is left unto you desolate ;” *—it brings before him the Father of us all taking up his complaint in these words, “ I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.” †

The theory indeed is delightful—to bring before our mind children in the flush of health, with a playful smile sporting on the countenance, and love urging them to exertion—but

* Matth. xxiii. 37, 38.

† Isaiah i. 2.

alas ! it is mostly a delusion. The end of instruction is indeed like the rose of richest fragrance, but like it too, it is surrounded with thorns. It is only ample experience, and a high sense of duty, that fit a teacher for the discharge of his arduous labours. The smile of hope brightens futurity, and anticipating the successful result of his instructions, he is cheered in the stern exercise of duty ; but the grand exciting motive of the Christian,—that which gives a regularity and intensity to his exertions, is a sense of his accountability before the bar of his God. A few weeks of the class-room would silence forever Mr. C.'s whining sentimentality ; or if his solitary dwelling were enlivened with bustle of a rising family, experience would gradually correct his mistakes, and force him to acknowledge that the Bible is of greater practical utility than he seems to suppose.

NOTE B.

REFERRED TO AT PAGE 164

“BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING.”

THESE words form the subject of a Tract published here some time ago, the great end of which is to shew, that there should be no anxiety about the business of life, the exercise of the affections, or even the salvation of the soul. The author of the tract I know not, but I understand it has been extensively circulated by Mr. Campbell, and if he is not the author, he must at least have similar sentiments, for what he is active in circulating, he certainly would not be ashamed to produce.

The words, in the first instance, are taken in their literal import. “There is no limitation here: you are to be careful for *nothing*, whatever your occupation may be, whatever your circumstances.”* This is, to say the least, a strange perversion of the passage. In its literal rendering it implies no such thing. The word in the original is the same as that in Matthew vi. 31, there rendered, “take no thought.” *Take no thought*, therefore, and *be careful for nothing*, are to be understood as equivalent expressions. At the time in which our translation of the New Testament was made, these expressions implied *distracting anxiety*. This is evident from the writings of those times. One example will be sufficient. In the life of Mr. John Fox, which is prefix-

ed to his Book of Martyrs, there is the following passage: "He would at no time suffer the care of his private estate to enter his mind, much less that it should, by *taking thought* for his household affairs, *be overcome or drawn aside.*"

The proper meaning of that *anxiety* which is forbidden in the injunction, "Be careful for nothing," or rather the degree of its intensity, may be correctly understood from the meaning of the Greek word used to express it. The word is *Μεσηυα*, which is derived from the adjective *Μεσηυα*, *dividing or distracting the mind*. This comes from *Μεσι*, *to divide*, from *Μεσ*, *a part*. The anxiety, therefore, here referred to, is of that nature, which, *by dividing or distracting the mind—destroys its energies*. Anxiety of this kind is forbidden, but not that anxiety which arises from prudence in connecting the means and the end. This is the general doctrine of Scripture on the subject, and proves the mind of the Spirit in these words to be such as I have described, and not such as are stated by the writer of the Tract. "He that provideth not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." "He that is diligent in his business shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men." "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

In the illustration of the prohibition, "Be careful for nothing," applied to the business of life, it is slightly modified, but still very objectionable. "The injunction," says the writer, "is not against your forming these plans, and schemes; but that you are not to place your happiness in the result; you are not to be anxious how they turn out."* There can be no plans formed, at least of any importance, without a prudent anxiety, and as it is granted that such plans may be formed, in so far the definition at the commencement is contradicted. Still the distinction adhered to is paradoxical. *There may be anxiety in forming plans, and the "injunction*

is not against forming them, but you are not to be anxious how they turn out." I still understand *anxiety* in the sense given to it by the Spirit, and conclude that the recommendation here given is not only absurd, but in practice impossible. It is undoubtedly proper not to place our happiness in the result of any speculation, but this is very different from not having an anxiety about the result. A prudent foresight necessarily produces a praise-worthy anxiety, and this may be in exercise when the happiness of the individual is placed beyond the fluctuations of time. No plans of importance can be formed, far less matured and watched in their progress, without anxiety, but this anxiety may exist while God has the supreme authority in the affections, and the busy citizen of the world may at the same time have his citizenship in heaven.

The exercise of the affections is the next subject to which the writer of this tract adverts. "If," says he, "you wish to have the right enjoyment of your affections, it must be in the out-flow of a universal disinterested love, which looks for no return, and which stands above all disappointment." With regard to the enjoyment of our affections, it is likewise true that we are not to place our happiness in them, but the expression that we are *to look for no return, and to stand above all disappointment*, is most unguarded. This is a return to the former definition of "Be careful for nothing," and contains a mixture of truth and error. We may look for a return of affection, without placing our happiness in it. When we allow our affections to flow out in friendship, we justly expect a return, but if we are disappointed, our happiness is not marred. We have a friend in heaven—he sticks closer than a brother, and he will never leave nor forsake those who trust in him. To be "above disappointment" is literally *to be careful* for no return of affection—it is romantic in theory, and if attempted in practice, it is Stoical apathy christianised.

With regard to the salvation of the soul, it is correct to say, that "we ought to have a deep interest in it," but it is

a most dangerous assertion, that "*we are not to be anxious about it.*" Are not the means and the end so connected in salvation, that even though the doctrine of Universal Pardon, and consequently assurance to those who embrace this pardon, were true, there must be a necessary anxiety about the means connected with salvation? When Paul was in the ship, he knew that all were to be saved, and yet his *be careful for nothing* was rightly understood by him, and properly acted on, when he said, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved."

I deny, however, that assurance is necessary to justifying faith, and therefore pay no attention to the inference deduced from the doctrine, taken as true; but independently of assurance, from the connection between the means and the end, I consider the advice in its literal import, as highly dangerous, and contrary to the spirit of the Scriptures. Christianity requires activity, and places the Christian under such circumstances, that he is not allowed to indulge in listless indifference, but must submit to anxiety, which, however, neither divides the affections, nor distracts the mind. *Acting* is a necessary ingredient of Christianity. We are on a journey, and we must press forward. We are labouring in our Master's field, and we must not look back with desire to the field occupied by Satan's agents, lest we be unfit for the kingdom of heaven. We are in the wilderness, and we must not sigh after the pleasures of Egypt, lest Canaan be forfeited. We are in an enemy's country, and, taking to ourselves the whole armour of God, we must fight the good fight of faith. We are engaged in a race, and we must run till we reach the goal. The way in which we tread is narrow; the gate at which we enter strait, and not accessible without striving. Our adversary is a lion, powerful to destroy—a serpent, cunning to deceive; and to secure ourselves from danger, we are, in the exercise of sobriety and vigilance, to resist, steadfast in the faith. To gain heaven on our side, we are to ask, to seek, and to knock.

The anxiety of the Christian, however, is moderated by

principle. He knows that he cannot of himself perform the required duties of Christianity, and panting after perfection as the hart pants after the water-brooks, in the bitter regrets of disappointment he exclaims, "Who is sufficient for these things?" "To will is present, but how to perform that which is good I find not." As a prisoner of hope, he turns to the strong hold, and, rejoicing in the gracious promise of his heavenly Father, "My grace is sufficient for thee," he breaks forth into the song of gratitude: "Thanks be unto God, who giveth *me* the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is indeed a beautiful theory, to *be careful for nothing* in worldly affairs, and there are few who would not wish having it in their power to exemplify the theory in practice. It is easy for such men as Mr. Campbell to talk in this way, considering the circumstances in which he has been placed by Providence. Snugly seated in a manse, with a stipend equal to his wants, it is not surprising that he finds pleasure in indulging the idea that he is abstracted from worldly matters, and requires to *be careful for nothing*. A snug manse and a comfortable stipend would lull the anxieties of the most of men, and without much Christianity about them, they might feel very happy in the abstract idea of *being careful for nothing*, because for them every thing had been *carefully* provided. Had Mr. C., however, no *care* in his preparations for the ministry? Had he no *anxiety* about securing his present situation? And if the Presbytery were to compare his doctrines with the standards of the church, and treat him as an ungrateful Son to merciful Fathers, would he *be careful for nothing*?* Can he not, therefore,

* In consequence of a memorial from several persons in the Parish of Row, complaining of the doctrines taught by Mr. Campbell, the Presbytery of Dumbarton appointed a committee to confer with him on the subject, and prepared questions to be answered by that gentleman, but he declined to give any written answers to those questions, on the ground of the informality of the appointment of the committee.

place himself in the situation of many a worthy man, who is surrounded with difficulties; and instead of a withering look of disapprobation, should he not rather, like his Master, cheer him onward in the path of duty. Paul had a mind of uncommon ardour, and having the care of all the churches, in connecting circumstances he was frequently much perplexed, but while he states his case, and feels like a man, he acts like a Christian, knowing the source of his strength.

The influence of Mr. C. has, in cases where it was practicable, affected his followers. Ladies who have literally *nothing* to do but to live on the produce of what was *carefully* hoarded up for them by *orthodox* parents, relatives, or interested friends, are very zealous in preaching this modern doctrine of *being careful for nothing*. In their case the injunction may easily be acted on, but the good creatures seem to forget that all have not deposits to draw upon at pleasure;

The committee gave in a report to the Presbytery, which was approved of by them. Mr. Campbell of Row, Mr. Story of Rosneath, and Mr. Dunlop, one of the elders of the Presbytery, dissented from the decision of the Presbytery, in consequence of which the case came before the General Assembly, on Wednesday, May 26. Mr. Cockburn, counsel for Mr. Campbell, &c., said that he was instructed by his clients to state, that they begged to withdraw their dissent from the decision of the Presbytery. After several of the members had delivered their opinions, Principal Macfarlane moved, "that the Assembly should grant permission to the complainers to withdraw their complaint; considering the vital importance of the subject, and that the doctrines have been condemned by the General Assembly, and are opposed to the word of God and the standards of our church, remits the case to the Presbytery of Dumbarton, to proceed in it as they may see just and for edification, according to the rules of the church; and to carry on the investigation until it is ripe for a final judgement, notwithstanding any appeal or complaint against their proceedings on preliminary points." Dr. Brown of Langton seconded the motion, which was then unanimously agreed to.

and those who find it necessary to be *careful* to "provide things honest in the sight of all men," are condemned as worshippers of the Mammon of unrighteousness.

It is in the spiritual application of the injunction, however, that the danger principally lies. We are indeed too apt to be *careless* about the state of our souls, and require not in this respect to be urged to indifference. What more agreeable to the carnality of the human heart, than to be told that we have nothing to do but to sit down in listless indifference, and leave all in the hands of God. What more pleasing to the natural mind, than to indulge the hope of securing the prize without running the race—of obtaining the conquest without the fight—of enjoying the rewards of victory without being called to endure the hardships of the conflict—and of reaching the heavenly Canaan without passing through the wilderness? Principles of this kind, if not arrested in their career, are calculated to produce the most baneful effects, and to make men satisfied with themselves when they are in reality indulging constitutional sloth, and gratifying the natural feelings of the unsanctified heart.

NOTE C.

REFERRED TO AT PAGE 165.

DIFFICULTY OF FINDING A CHARACTERISTIC NAME FOR THE FOLLOWERS OF MR. ERSKINE.

It is not easy to find a name by which to distinguish the abettors of the new system of Theology. The name of a party, however, is often of great importance. By it the unthinking may be deceived, and the silly led captive. The Unitarian, by his party name, insinuates, that he alone believes in the unity of God ; the Roman Catholic, that his religion is not only respectable in its origin, but as to extent, universal. The Deists in France, at the time of the Revolution, by the sounding name of Theophilanthropists, wished the world to believe that they retained the essence of true religion—love to God, and love to man. A relation of my own, whose creed I never could comprehend, either from conversation, letters, or repeated publications, settled the matter to his satisfaction by assuming the name of *Scripture Christian*. Those who have embraced Mr. Erskine's system, are indignant at the name of *Gareloch Heretics*. To call them *Campbellites*, *Erskinites*, or by the name of any other person of notoriety among them, would be conferring too much individual honour, and might, from the pride of celebrity, cause dissension, and ultimately "separate very friends." They may be called *Eclectics*, for they embrace part of the sentiments of many different sects. They have the assurance of the *Berean* ;—the simple assent of the *San-demanian* ;—the eternal justification of the early *Moravians* ;

—nothing to do with the law, as the *Antinomians*;—an inherent power to believe, and a general election, resembling that of the *Arminians*;—Christ's reign on earth, with the *Millenarians*;—an inexpressible something of mysticism, like the *Quietists*;—the peccability of Christ's human nature, like the followers of *Madame Bourignon*;—and, though not avowed, yet necessarily connected with the system, the final restoration of the wicked, like the *Universalists*;—incomprehensible modifications of almost every doctrine of Christianity;*—enthusiasm developed in pretended revelations, prophesies, miracles, and (*one thing new under the sun!*) writing *unknown* languages. Combined with this selection there is much of “*man's religion*,” and in many respects, the system has a close resemblance to the opinions of the Stoics; which can easily be accounted for by tracing it to the workings of the natural mind, endeavouring to harmonise Christianity with what is agreeable to the unsanctified nature.

The principles of the Stoics apathised the finest feelings of nature, and made them express the utmost indifference, under any circumstances which affected them;—and some of the abettors of Mr. Erskine's system have pretended to be above the feelings of nature, and, in direct opposition to the conduct of our Saviour at the grave of Lazarus, have converted the darkened chamber of bereavement into a scene of rejoicing.

Depending on their own merits, the Stoics were proud and overbearing;—and Mr. E.'s followers, centered in self, con-

* Mr. Erskine and a considerable number of his adherents are Baptists, and one of their number, I am told, has been baptised no less than three times, as he says he was not a believer when he was baptised formerly. How often he may renew the ordinance cannot be known, as I suppose he will require a new baptism at every new modification of faith which he acquires. If so, it is not improbable that he may become the founder of a new sect, which, for distinction's sake, we may call POLLAKIBAPTISTS.

demn all others as ungodly, and with the utmost self-complacency, indulge feelings of conscious superiority.

The *absolute perfection of virtue* to which the Stoics pretended, is akin to the supposed effect of embracing pardon, and being *in the Spirit*.

The Stoics, proud of their fancied virtue, supposed that the Gods had no claims against them; and therefore *fear* formed no part of their religion. Those who embrace the doctrines of Universal Pardon and Assurance, have "*joy*," but no "*trembling*."

Many of the Stoics did not think prayer necessary, and those who did pray did not confess sin.—Mr. E. and his adherents believe that all their sins have been already remitted, and therefore pray only for a *sense of pardon*.

In the supposed path of duty, the Stoics pretended to be indifferent as to the result of events.—The misapplication of the injunction, "Be careful for nothing," is a revival of this antiquated folly.

All who have adopted the system have not embraced the whole of these errors, and even among those who have embraced them all there is a continual change of opinion; but these are their distinguishing *marks* at present, and according to the number of errors adopted, appears to be the celebrity of the initiated individual.

Viewing such a motley combination, the scientific Botanist would say it was *monstrous*; and the keeper of a menagerie would denominate it a *nondescript*. It is, in fact, the elements of a mind in progress, grasping at a something incomprehensible—indescribable—unutterable—even unknown—and therefore nameless.

NOTE D.

REFERRED TO AT PAGE 165.

GARELOCH MIRACLES, SPEAKING OF TONGUES, &c.

ALTHOUGH I anticipated that Mr. Erskine's system would produce enthusiasm in many of his adherents, I had no idea, when the preceding letter was commenced, that they would ever have proceeded to such excesses. The last few weeks, however, have developed a scene of enthusiasm and delusion, far exceeding the wildest reveries of a Buchan or a Southcote, and it must afford matter of astonishment to many, that in the nineteenth century, such fooleries should have been acted in a Protestant country.

The extravagance of the Gareloch Enthusiasts may be traced to constitutional temperament, circumstances under which they have been placed, and the peculiar doctrines which they have gradually imbibed. Constitutionally ardent, and endowed with tolerable abilities, the leading members at Fernicarry possess considerable intensity of mind, and are admirably fitted, under favourable circumstances, for soaring to the high regions of enthusiasm. In Miss Mary, particularly, who has been the principal conductor of these absurdities, there is a romantic wildness of imagination, combined with a restlessness of spirit, which admirably qualifies her for new creations of fancy ; and the *soul* which she puts into the minutest action, gives it a commanding interest. Whatever she undertakes, she does with all her might, and with *more than her might*, so that her extravagance is apt to be overlooked in the momentary interest which she excites. A visitor remarking lately to her mo-

ther that she was too zealous, and that her violent excitements would injure her health, the answer, though laconic, is truly descriptive of her character: "*It is her way.*"—Absorbed in apparent thought—with a full eye rolling occasionally upward, and then shut on the world—a winning smile playing on her countenance—and then a few words dropped to her visitors; or when, excited by circumstances, the natural feelings of her soul press for utterance, and her language and manner are peculiarly her own; she is so much out of the common course, that in many cases, over weak minds, she exerts a powerful influence. Still she is a female of ordinary capacity; but so under the power of exciting circumstances, that her constitutional fervour hurries her along to the most extravagant excesses.

Owing to circumstances, too, under which she has been placed, she may be called the *nurseling* of enthusiasm. Fernicarry is situated at the extremity of a beautiful loch, and is bounded by hills which limit the view to a very narrow space. Shut out from the world, the inhabitants of Fernicarry are admirably situated for "picturing things unseen." What is wanting, however, from the limited view of terrestrial objects, is supplied from a sky of boundless extent and varied beauty, which stretches over them; and, "active fancy travelling beyond thought," the mind roams at large, till, by degrees, the creations of the imagination appear to be realities, and are spoken of as such, with an ardour which their supposed importance requires, and an assurance, which, from their being ever present to the mind, "gives to airy nothings, a local habitation and a name."

Already, likewise, has consumption made deadly ravages at Fernicarry, and the successive dropping of its inmates into a premature grave, is like a funeral knell ever sounding in the ears of the survivors, "Prepare to die." Under the pressure of a disease, insidious, but sure in its results, and reminded by every surrounding object of the late departure of two members of the family, the mind is kept under serious impressions, and these circumstances, combined with

others, give the imagination an impulse unusual and intense.

The Memoirs of Isabella, which are well known, must satisfy every intelligent Christian, that her piety, though ardent and sincere, was connected with much weakness and inconsistency. Leaving her bed at midnight, and wandering about for hours in the fields, even in the depth of winter, no principle of Christianity can justify; and this, along with other instances of a similar nature, sufficiently proves, that, though a devoted Christian, she possessed a wildness of imagination, which, combined with mental weakness, had a tendency to produce actions of a highly imprudent nature. Her spiritual Fathers, by over indulgence, misdirected her feelings, naturally less strong than those of her sisters; and, like a spoiled child, she was allowed to dictate, when she required salutary admonition, and Christian advice.

Some of the clergymen in her vicinity were unsettled in opinion, and her errors and theirs being mutually exchanged, and then combined into one creed, they became helpers of each other's belief. At this stage in particular, the doctrine of *assurance as essential to faith* was embraced, and shortly afterwards, that of *Universal Pardon*; and by successive new discoveries, Fernicarry has become a hot-bed for the growth of every *exotic* which Messrs. Erskine, Campbell, Irving, &c. choose to plant; and which, from the nature of the soil, grow with such luxuriance, as to astonish not only those who are unacquainted with the horticulture of heresy, but even the spiritual gardeners themselves.

Owing to the bursting of a small blood-vessel in the lungs, and consequent debility, Miss Mary was considered in incipient consumption, and having been well trained under her sister, she acted over again, with matured experience, the scenes by which Isabella had gained so much notoriety; and did, in infirm health, what had before been done under a rapid decline. Circumstances, however, changed the aspect of affairs. The hand of death was not pressing on her,

as it had been on her sister, and it was only necessary for her to believe that she was in sufficient health to rise from her couch, to enable her to perform the action. A celebrated preacher in England visiting this part of the country about a year ago, a lady who had for a long time fancied herself unwell, was recommended by him to take exercise, use strengthening diet, and offer the prayer of faith. The lady had a great veneration for her Reverend adviser, and the advice, suiting her temperament, operated like a charm. She immediately did what she could have done long before, had her imagination been engaged. This supposed miracle gave the lady notoriety *on account of her faith*; and the rest of the *chambered sisters* were well prepared to receive a charm to break the spell which bound them under an imaginary disease.

What was done once, might be done again, and one of the *Brotherhood*, having had his faith "screwed up to the sticking place," *a sound*, to use his own language, *proceeded from his forehead like thunder*, and overpowered, he felt constrained to go to the couch of his sister, who had been confined for some months under an imaginary illness, and to command her, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to arise and walk!—when, *mirabile dictu*! she sprang out of bed, in perfect health!!! But his own account of the matter must be the best, and this is contained in a letter which he wrote to Miss Mary Campbell, on the same day on which the *miracle* was performed; of which, by the kindness of a friend, I have been favoured with an exact copy, *from the original*.

PORT-GLASGOW, March, 1830.

My Dear Sister,

Lift up your voice with us; let us exalt his name, for he hath done great things for us, and holy is his name. There is still power in the name of Jesus, yea, all power in heaven and on earth. Our beloved Margaret hath been made to hear his voice, and to rise up, leap, and walk. Faith in his name hath given her soundness in the presence of us all. She is now our first fruits of the Lord's work, which he will work, and none can prevent. Mary, my love, lay

aside unbelief, it is of the Devil; hear God's voice to you also, rise up, and walk, what hindereth? Satan, and only Satan. My well-beloved in the Lord, rise up, and walk. Do not—Oh! I beseech you—grieve not the Holy Spirit. Christ hath need of us all to testify for his name. He cannot longer refrain;—do not grieve him;—rise and cry aloud, for the day is at hand, it hasteth, it hasteth greatly. Oh! rise, my love, and plead for Jesus; the time is short, yea, shorter than we know—cry aloud for souls. We are to meet this evening, and we will make request (I speak by permission of the Holy Spirit) that the power of Christ may be made to rest upon all his members. We will put him in remembrance of the glorious things done under his banners in the days that are past, and in his name, from this day, we will display our banners, and he will fulfil our prayers. We have in his strength given ourselves to him, and from this time henceforward, we are his witnesses, wheresoever we may be led. I have received the Holy Ghost, which men and Devils may gainsay if they will, but they shall be put to shame. My dear, dear, dear Sister, it is in the spirit of a sound mind in which I now write, and I know that the Spirit testifies to you that it is so. We have seen great things to-day, for Jesus, through such a worm as I am, spoke to our well-beloved Margaret, and she is now quite well; and I am assured that this is only the beginning of miracles. Men need now a loud voice, and the Lord will give them a voice of thunder, as when a lion roareth with his voice. The wisdom of the wise men shall be made foolishness, and the understanding of the prudent brought to nothing. He hath long time held his peace, but silence is broken, and mighty and strong will the voice be made.

Now, my love, farewell, as my time is expired. Meet with us before the Lord, and he will hear us. Love to your dear family.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

(Signed) JAMES M'DONALD.

To Miss Mary Campbell, }
Fernicarry. }

This is a most blasphemous epistle, and feelings of charity towards the writer incline me to think, that from over-excitement he must be under mental derangement. I hope, however, that the exciting cause will soon be removed, and

that, as formerly, there may be again applied to him the beautiful description of the true Christian: "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

Miss Mary was in bed when she received the above letter, but the perusal of it inspired her with an ambition to emulate the "beloved Margaret." She was behind in the march of wonders, and therefore instantly rose, with a determination to out-strip them all, by doing "*still greater things than these.*" But as I have been so fortunate as to get her own account of the affair, in a letter to a friend, I will not spoil a good story by attempting to tell it.

FERNICARRY, April 4th, 1830.

Very Dear Servant of the Lord Jesus,

In attempting to state to you the circumstances of my being *raised up*, I feel my need of being dwelt in by the Holy Ghost; yea, mightily dwelt in, in order to enable me to give unto the Lord the glory that is due to his great name, for so glorious a manifestation of his power and love. On the Saturday previous to my restoration to health, I was suffering much from pain in my chest, and breathlessness. On Sunday I was very ill, and lay for several hours in a state of insensibility, but was considerably relieved towards evening. In answer, I have no *doubt*, to the prayers of some dear Christian friends who were with me, about 8 o'clock the Lord began to pour down his Spirit copiously upon us, (for they had all by this time assembled in my room for the purpose of spending some time in prayer.) This down-pouring continued till about 10 o'clock, when I felt so strengthened by the mighty power of Christ, as to be able to walk several times through the room; so long as I exercised faith in the mighty power of Jesus, I felt my strength encrease, as it is said—"Be it unto thee according to thy faith." But I soon began to think of my own weakness, and, losing sight of the power, felt returning pain and feebleness. Next day I was worse than I had been for some weeks, the agony of Saturday excepted. On Tuesday I was no better. On Wednesday I did not feel *quite* so languid, but was suffering from my breathing and palpitation of my heart. Two individuals who saw me about four hours before my recovery, said that I never would be strong—that I was not to expect *a miracle being*

wrought upon me—and that it was quite foolish in one who was in such a poor state of health, ever to think of going to the Heathen. I told them they would see and hear of miracles very soon; and no sooner had the last of the above-mentioned individuals left me, than I was constrained of the Spirit to go and ask the Father in the name of Jesus to stretch forth his hand to heal, and that signs and wonders might again be done in the name of his holy child Jesus. One thing I was enabled to ask in faith, nothing doubting, which was, that by the next morning I might have some miracle to inform them of. It was not long after this that I received our dear Brother James MacDonald's letter, giving me an account of his Sister's having been raised, and commanding me to *rise and walk*. I had scarcely read the first page when I became quite overpowered, and laid it aside for a few minutes; but I had no rest in my spirit until I took it up again, and began to read. As I read, every word came with power, but when I came to the *command to arise*, it came home with a power which no words can describe; it was felt to be indeed the voice of Christ—it was such a voice of power as could not be resisted. A mighty power was instantaneously exerted upon me. I first felt as if I had been lifted up from off the earth, and all my diseases taken off me. At the voice of Jesus I was surely made in a moment to stand upon my feet, leap and walk—sing and rejoice. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness; for his wonderful works to the children of men.

Yours in the Lord Jesus,

(Signed) MARY CAMPBELL.

Rev. Mr. Campbell, Row.

These letters evince the degree of enthusiasm to which their writers, and others of the same persuasion, had attained, before their pretensions to the gift of tongues. Having adopted, by means of their spiritual Instructors, extravagant views of the operation of the Holy Spirit, they were, in a peculiar sense, *in the Spirit*, and had *the mind of Christ*; and, modelling the Scripture on these topics to their favourite prepossessions, they came to the conclusion that they were enlightened to understand the mind of the Spirit in the Scriptures, as perfectly as the Apostles were inspired to

write it! This prepared them for the next stage of delusion, viz: that the same power which enabled the Apostles to speak in tongues, was also in them, and that their thoughts and words were not their own, but the Spirit's. Thus was the foundation laid for speaking and writing *unknown languages*, declaring new revelations, and performing actions, not imperfect like those of saints in all ages, but perfect as the Spirit by whom they were influenced. Miracles performed on themselves by faith, might be performed on others, and hence their attempts—I need not add, without success. To this their revelations were added; and not being very charitable towards those who differ from them in opinion, a secret revenge prompted them to foretell the speedy approach of the Millenium, accompanied with the utter destruction of their *enemies*, and of course their own honour and exaltation; which ideas, being the creatures of imagination, soon became the creatures of reason, at least of *their reason*, and gave a wonderful intensity to their minds; so that their “sayings and doings,” for a few weeks past, have not only been the cause of “no small stir,” but the all-engrossing subject of conversation.

The reports which were at first circulated concerning them were so extravagant, and so much out of the common range, even of *modern wonders*, that I was inclined to attribute them, either to malice, or to fame with her hundred tongues, stalking along with rapid pace, and hiding her head in the clouds. Fame, however, in this instance, has been so overpowered with the intelligence, that the half has not been told. According to the report of one of their staunch adherents, Heaven is now so much on their side, that gainsayers must be convinced, for *seeing is believing*.

From a person who attended one of their meetings, at which Miss Campbell was present, I received an account of the manner of their proceedings; and though, upon that occasion, they did not proceed to such extravagant excesses as they sometimes do, yet there was enough of folly displayed to expose them to merited ridicule. During prayer,

reading of the Scriptures, and singing of psalms, Miss C. appeared much moved, sometimes uttering deep groans, and faint ejaculations ; but when these exercises were finished, her agitation became extreme. She now turned her eyes upwards to heaven ; then closed them, and fell back upon her chair ; pressed her hands upon her forehead ; and exhibited, by unnatural contortions of her features, the greatest perturbation. In a high state of excitement, she began to speak in detached portions of Scripture, such as, “ Behold he cometh, and every eye shall see him ” — “ Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit. ” — “ Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish. ” — These were interspersed with ejaculatory petitions for the down-pouring of the Holy Ghost, and earnest entreaties that she might be enabled to speak the mind of the Spirit. After a short silence, during which she kept her eyes fixed upwards, she commenced talking in unintelligible *gibberish*, and prayed that Christ would give to some of his members present, the gift of interpretation, that the precious words of the Spirit might not be lost, but that the church might be edified. She continued speaking her *unknown* tongue for a considerable time, but the gift of interpretation was not bestowed ; although one young man stood for upwards of half an hour, motionless as a statue, with his eyes intently fixed upon the ceiling, as if he expected to see the Spirit burst through the roof. In vain, however, he strained his vision, no Spirit appeared, and he was obliged to revert his fine blue eyes, lest they should start from their orbs with over-earnestness of gazing. Miss Campbell then remonstrated with her associates, in words to the following effect. “ Oh ! how is it that none of you will interpret ? ye know that ye have the gifts—ye know that ye have the gifts—they were given to the church, and they have never been withdrawn. It is your want of faith which hinders you. Oh ! pray that you may have faith to enable you to interpret, that the precious truths of the Spirit be not lost. O Lord ! send us among those who will understand what thy Spirit speaks by

us." All this rhetoric, however, produced no effect. None present seemed to have faith enough to interpret her dark sayings, and the modern *Mene, Mene*, remained uninterpreted, and (with reverence be it spoken) must so remain for ever. To make the most of the affair, however, one of the *Brethren*, with the utmost gravity, wrote down every *mystic sound* as it was uttered, hoping, it may be presumed, that they might interpret it at their leisure, if the Spirit happened at any future time to be more favourable. Miss C. afterwards wrote with considerable rapidity, and in a violent state of agitation, about a quarto page of certain *unknown* characters, which, like the gibberish she spoke, she pretended to be *dictated by the Holy Ghost!!!* Her friends firmly believe all this absurdity, and a few sentences from their prayers will shew their sentiments: "We give thee thanks, O Father, that thou hast already manifested thyself among us, by signs and wonders; and hast, in answer to the prayer of faith, shewn that disease can be healed, and that there is still power in the name of thy holy child Jesus. And now, O Father, we pray that thou wouldst do still greater things than these, that thy church may be edified, and a gainsaying world convinced; and as thou hast already given some of us to speak with tongues, we pray that thou wouldst bestow this gift more abundantly upon us. Thou knowest that we covet earnestly the best gifts, and why may not we, as thy servants have done in former ages, raise the dead, cast out devils, heal the sick? We know, O heavenly Father, that whatever we ask in the name of Christ, we shall receive; and we pray in his name that thou wouldst give us that faith which will enable us to perform these things, that thy power may be glorified, and thine enemies confounded."—This requires no comment—it is a climax of folly, absurdity, and blasphemy. It is the wild raving of a distempered enthusiasm, and will do more to crush the heresy which has given rise to it, than a thousand bulky volumes of controversy.

In some of their meetings now, the *Brethren* and *Sisters*

proceed to much greater extravagancies than any yet mentioned. They frequently meet in the evening, and continue together till 4 or 5 o'clock on the following morning, engaged in their enthusiastic exercises, and frequently heightening their devotional feelings by hideous yells, unearthly groans, and loud shouts of joy, to the no small annoyance of the peaceful tenants who are so unfortunate as to be domiciled in the same, or in the adjoining premises. On one occasion of this kind in Glasgow, the noise was so excessive, as to collect a mob, and it is even said that the police were obliged to interfere, in order to quell the uproar.

The effect which these excesses produce on weak minds is astonishing. At a meeting in Glasgow, one of the *Brethren*, who, it would seem, was rather a *raw recruit*, and had not been sufficiently *drilled* in the *exercise* of his imagination, was so overpowered, that when he appeared next morning, he was as "wan and woe be-gone" as Macbeth when seated at table with the ghost of Banquo. His friends, alarmed at his unearthly appearance, anxiously requested to know the cause of his agitation; when he broke out into a truly sublime poetical rhapsody concerning the nearness of our Lord's coming, and, with the most violent emotion, told them that he had seen, at the meeting on the previous evening, fire in motion, and anon resting on the heads of the *Brethren* and *Sisters*. He was so impressed, indeed, with the conviction that the Millenium was about to commence, that he intended not to resume his business. He did not, however, like Nebuchadnezzar of old, remain seven years shut out from men, for in a few days his reason returned unto him, and he resumed his usual avocations, "with head erect, and clothed like other men." He was now exceedingly anxious to have the story quashed, but this was impossible, as the trumpet of fame had already blown its shrill blast, and spread the report more rapidly than even the motion of the imaginary fire. The *Brethren* and *Sisters* feel indignant when this circumstance is mentioned, and express, in the strongest terms, their disapprobation, calling

the hero of the tale a "*silly body*." I must do him the justice, however, to say, that he is not more "*silly*" than others of the *Brotherhood*; and as I always endeavour to account for wonders in the simplest manner possible, I suppose he has, in the confusion common at such meetings, accidentally received a blow on the eye, which, as the children say, would cause "*the fire to flash from his eyes*;" or perhaps, by way of experiment, he pressed his fingers under his eyes, and produced double vision, so that, after all, it might be only the light of the candles, multiplied and put into motion by optical deception! But, laying aside supposition, the circumstance can easily be accounted for. His mind has not been prepared to embrace all the absurdities which he saw practised, and by allowing his fancy to out-strip his reason, he became, for the moment, the dupe of imagination, the mistakes of which, however, his better judgment soon corrected.

There is nothing remarkable in ladies rising from the couch to which they had been confined for several months, and appearing in tolerable health. Many have confined themselves as long, from a supposed illness, or to gratify some particular feeling. I have been in company with a lady, who, at intervals, takes a few month's repose, and appears again in excellent health. I have seen her immediately after one of these *snug naps*, and she exhibited a flow of spirits in innocent amusement, as ardent as Miss Campbell can display in her ordinary reveries, and appeared more refreshed by her protracted *nap*, than drowsy dames, aroused by the sound of the portentous word *Miracle*. Instances of this kind, indeed, are of frequent occurrence; and a Clergyman from Ireland lately informed me that a friend of his, solely from the effect of imagination, had not risen from bed for twelve months. The case of Charles XII. of Sweden, is well known. Taken prisoner by the Turks at Bender, he confined himself to bed for ten months, under pretence of sickness; but at the end of that time, despairing of arm-

ing the Porte in his favour, he suddenly rose from his couch, and travelled with expedition through Germany to his own dominions.

The disease of the first of the three ladies who have been the subjects of the modern *miracles*, was mostly, if not altogether, imaginary. Several months before her cure *by faith* was effected, she had to be seated by attendants on her pony, and in one of her rides, having been obliged to dismount, she re-mounted without assistance, and with so much agility, that a Clergyman who witnessed the action, and who had for some time thought that her illness was more imaginary than real, was confirmed in his suspicions. The result proved what any one acquainted with her might have anticipated, without calling in the aid of supernatural agency.

The Port-Glasgow lady (Miss M'Donald) is still as she was before, weak and emaciated. She has gained nothing by the *miracle*, and is as much in reality, and even in appearance, the subject of the sick-room now, as she was some weeks before her *miracle-working* brother commanded her to "*rise and walk.*" Having been told that her medical attendant had, previous to her pretended *miraculous* recovery, stated that her disease was mostly imaginary, and had recommended her to go to the country; I wrote to a friend in Port-Glasgow, who I knew had the means of obtaining correct information on the subject, and from him I have received the following satisfactory letter. The signature would be given, but a respect to personal feelings renders its suppression prudent.

PORT-GLASGOW, May 25th. 1830.

Dear Sir,

Yours I received, and in answer to your enquiries I may state, that I know from the most indubitable authority, that Miss M'Donald's medical attendant, had, a week or two before her pretended *miraculous* recovery, pronounced her *entirely free of bodily disease*; and recommended the family to remove to the country, as the best

means of enabling Miss M'D. to recover strength, which he thought she would do, though not to the same extent as formerly. His opinion, I think, will yet be verified, if over-excitement does not produce real disease. To me, and others of her acquaintance, she exhibited evident symptoms of hypochondria; and her medical adviser, in talking of her case to a relation of mine, expressed his firm conviction that this was her chief ailment. In general, however, he is very cautious in giving any information concerning her.

I am, Dear Sir,

Truly Yours,

Rev. A. Robertson, }
Greenock.

Miss Campbell rejoices that her medical attendants pronounced her disease incurable, as her restoration to health renders her "*a living miracle!*" She undoubtedly was, and is still, the subject of the insidious disease which has already brought two members of the family to an untimely grave; and her apparent recovery is no proof that her disease is removed. Though under disease, however, she imagined herself to be much worse than she was in reality. She was not in robust health; the circumstances of the family cast a gloom over her mind, and she fancied that she was rapidly hastening to the grave. The sympathy of friends was shewn towards her, in the same manner as it had been shewn towards her late sister; and from the symptoms which she described, and which she fancied she felt, she not only deceived herself, but those who visited her professionally. Medical men are never more liable to be imposed on, than when the disease of the patient is, either in part or in whole, the effect of imagination. Their decisions are formed from appearances and described symptoms; and the more the disease is the effect of imagination, the more complicated are the symptoms, and the description becomes so like reality, that a physician, even though well skilled in his profession, being obliged to draw his conclusions from the *data* furnished, may declare concerning the patient, what is not true in reality. The decision of medical men on the case of

Miss Campbell, however, is, I fear, too correct; but the event which they foretold may not happen so soon, as, judging from appearances, they perhaps anticipated.

The power of imagination in many cases of real disease, is astonishing. A sudden report of some impending danger has frequently raised the sick, and caused them to perform actions, which neither they nor others could have supposed it possible to accomplish. In cases of hypochondria, a complete cure is sometimes effected by a sudden shock of the nervous system; and in the history of science, many remarkable cures by the agency of Galvanism, are recorded. A violent mental excitement, caused by the imagination being powerfully acted on, produces the same effect. The cures said to have been effected by the Jansenists are well known, and can be satisfactorily accounted for on this principle. The subjects of the greater part of them were weak, infirm persons, and evidently as weak in mind as in body, who placed implicit confidence in the prayers and merits of the crafty monks, and came to the tomb of the Abbe De Paris, firmly expecting the interposition of Heaven in their behalf. This belief, combined with the excess of enthusiasm in their devotions, wrought up their minds to such a pitch of excitement, that a visible improvement of health was, in some cases, the natural result. A violent agitation, either of mind or body, frequently, in cases of apparent decline, causes a healthful re-action of the lungs, by which the disease is protracted, and sometimes even removed. A blood-vessel may burst in the lungs, when they are otherwise in a tolerably healthy state; and a general weakness for a limited period may be the only consequence of the event.

Is Miss Campbell well? She says she is "perfectly recovered." The disease of the family is insidious, and it shews the power of her imagination more than her real state, that she is now enduring so much fatigue, with a hectic flush playing across her cheek, and a pulse fluttering at above 100. Her occasional depressions, morning weakness, &c. are indications at least of a delicate frame; and there

is not the slightest reason to conclude that her general health is in the least improved in reality, by her pretended *miraculous* recovery. Some months before that event, several persons who saw her did not think that she was at all so ill as was represented. Her disease was wonderfully adapted to the circumstances in which she was placed, and she was more or less vigorous as the case required. One person, in particular, took tea with her some time before the *miracle* was performed, and she then appeared in better health than she does at present. The excitement, however, which has raised her from the couch, may possibly be of advantage to her; and I fervently wish that the All-wise Disposer of events may so over-rule even her extravagant absurdities, that they may prove the means of prolonging her life, till she is brought to a sense of her folly, that while she tells others what God has done for her soul, she may be enabled to adore that wisdom, which, from events apparently the most untoward, deduces ultimate good. I fear, however, that this event cannot reasonably be expected. From her appearance it is evident that "fell disease is tugging at her breast," and if she continues to indulge in her extravagant excitements, she will, in all probability, speedily become a martyr to her own imprudence. Being anxious to obtain correct information respecting the real state of her health, I wrote to the Rev. Mr. Arthur of Helensburgh, and by his kind attention I have been favoured with the following satisfactory account.

HELENSBURGH, 26th May, 1830.

My Dear Sir,

At the time your letter came to hand to-day, it was not convenient for me to write an answer; I shall now, however, state a few circumstances, on the correctness and veracity of which you may confidently rely. Miss Mary Campbell, previous to her pretended miraculous recovery, had been for some time convalescent; and at the time she received the letter from Mr. M'Donald of Port-Glasgow, calling upon her in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, "to arise and walk," she was by no means in so weak and debilitated a state

as she had been some time before. Her sudden, miraculous recovery, as she calls it, was simply the effect of strong mental excitement, produced partly by her absurd and extravagant views of the doctrine of Miracles, and partly by the letter she received from Mr. M'Donald, operating powerfully on her imagination.

Till a few weeks since, I had not seen Mary Campbell for some months; but my own opinion is, that she has been for several months, and still is to this moment, labouring under a decided pulmonary disease, the same which cut off her sister Isabella, and more lately her brother Samuel; and which, I have little hesitation in stating as my decided opinion, will, ere long, cut her off likewise. At the same time, however, from my knowledge of Miss Campbell's proneness to strong mental excitements, I am convinced, that her illness was, in part at least, imaginary. Respecting her present state of health, I cannot speak decidedly from personal observation, as I have not seen her for some time, perhaps three or four weeks; but from what I have been told upon the best authority, I firmly believe that she is as evidently now, as she was ten months ago, the subject of confirmed pulmonary disease. When her medical attendant called to see her, a few weeks ago, when she was in this village, he found her pulse about 115 or 120, I forget which. This he told me himself immediately on his leaving her.

To the above statements I have nothing material to add. It is well known, that Miss Campbell, and others in this neighbourhood, are at present labouring under a species of derangement, occasioned by strong delusion. Should you consider what I have stated of any consequence, you are at full liberty to insert it in your forthcoming publication, either with or without my name as you may think proper. Hoping that your work will tend, by the Divine blessing, to counteract the wild and visionary notions of these deluded votaries of enthusiasm,

I remain,

My Dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) JOHN ARTHUR.

Rev. A. Robertson, }
Greenock. }

The wonderful answers which Miss Campbell has received to prayer, are not surprising. It is not long since she

discovered the proper manner of prayer. She confesses that she and other Christians had been "*much in the dark*" respecting that duty, and the "*light*" which she has now obtained, has enabled her to discover "*two gross mistakes*" into which Christians have fallen in presenting their petitions. She considers it, for instance, a *gross mistake* in believers to pray to God for any blessing, adding the condition, "if it be agreeable to thy will;" because God will not give his people faith to pray for any thing which is not agreeable to his will, and annexing such a condition is, in fact, doubting the faithfulness of God, which, to use her own words, "is a shocking thought." In this, the good girl might have perceived, that she was taking for granted the thing to be proved, viz., whether a prayer is of faith or not. The prayer, for example, that God would bestow upon the *brethren* the power of healing the sick, raising the dead, &c.* was offered by one of *the people* whom she calls *his people*; and therefore not presented with the condition, "if it be agreeable to thy will," which she thinks so "*shocking*," but in the faith which did not doubt God's faithfulness. A question will settle this "*shocking*" matter. Has that prayer been answered? No. *His people*, then, in some cases are faithless; and they will be as safe, till they get more *light* on the subject, to add in future to their petitions, even the "*shocking*" condition—"if it be agreeable to thy will."

The other "*gross mistake*" in prayer, is entreating God to bestow any blessing *for Christ's sake*. "We are not commanded," Mary says, "to pray *for Christ's sake*, but to pray *in Christ's name*; that is, to substitute ourselves in Christ's stead, and then it is not we that pray, but Christ, and we know that him the Father heareth always." If Mary supposed this distinction was a revelation from heaven, her *spirit* seems to be rather in the *dark* about the matter. We pray *in the name of Christ*, and receive an answer to our

* See Page 257.

prayers *for his sake*. The *name of Christ* is the appointed channel through which we offer our prayers; and the cause for which they are answered, is *for Christ's sake*. A common sense distinction, which Mary's *outré spirit* perhaps cannot comprehend. Besides, "it is not we that pray," she says, "but Christ." Then no mortal has ever prayed; Christ alone prays—and when *we* are commanded to pray in Christ's name, the *we* means one, viz. Christ, and *Christ is to pray in Christ's name!*—Enough—the girl is raving.

Since Miss Mary received these *illuminations* concerning the manner of prayer, she has, according to her own account, repeatedly received *special answers to prayer*. A single instance may suffice. One morning a friend of hers was extremely anxious to proceed on his journey, but was prevented by a heavy fall of snow. After waiting for some time, and perceiving no appearance of a change, Miss Mary, feeling, it would appear, a deep interest in the departure of her *friend*, engaged in earnest prayer that the storm might cease; and while she was yet upon her knees, the sky brightened, the clouds were dispersed, the sun shone forth, and a pleasant day succeeded. Allowing all this to be true, as I believe it is, what is there in it at all wonderful? Would not the storm have ceased at exactly the same time, though Miss Mary had never prayed? Or can any one imagine that heaven would thus interpose, in order to enable a solitary individual to leave Fernicarry at a particular time, because, forsooth, it would have been inconvenient for him to remain till next day? Such absurdities are like the ravings of the mad astronomer mentioned in *Rasselas*, who fancied that Providence had delegated to him the power of dispensing and controlling the storms, and of adjusting the balance of the clouds.

Casting out devils is not a very difficult operation in the manner in which Miss Mary proceeds, and in the effect which she produces. I shall give one example.—A sturdy beggar came into the kitchen. Miss Mary went and spoke to her the word of the Lord; but the beggar answered with oaths

and imprecations. Mary then felt a momentary weakness of the flesh, and lifted up her heart in prayer to God, that he would enable her to cast out the unclean spirit. Having done so, she felt the power of the Holy Ghost, and with a loud voice rebuked the devil, which immediately became subject; and she that had been possessed heard the word with meekness and submission. The sailor's account of his exploit with the Prince of Darkness is more wonderful, and the action more decisive in its results. He shot the fiend himself: "*with a silver sixpence,*" and ended the contest by one triumphant victory. A sixpence, or even a halfpenny, will subdue a beggar's devil at any time. It is said that the mother of one of the initiated is possessed by a devil, but it appears to be an *obstinately stiff one*, for all the *faith* of the *Sisterhood* combined, cannot cast it out.

The monks of Kozhaia manage this matter better than Miss Mary, as may be seen by the following extract from "*Fuller's Tour in the Turkish Empire.*"

"The monks of Kozhaia still pretend to the miraculous power of casting out devils; and as the popular belief gives full credit to their pretensions, maniacs are continually brought to them for cure. Two had been dismissed just before my arrival. The scene of their operations is a large grotto, excavated in a cliff, which overhangs the convent. In this dark and gloomy cavern the patient is heavily chained, and supplied with very scanty fare; a priest remains constantly near him, muttering certain forms of prayer; and he is from time to time drenched with cold water, poured over him from buckets. This rude discipline is no doubt often successful, and should any evil spirit be found hardy enough to resist the repeated assaults of an element so opposite to his native one, *the monks find a ready excuse for their failure by attributing it to the patient's want of faith.*"

I would not wish that Miss Mary were subjected to such treatment; but I am inclined to think that a shower-bath of this kind would have a salutary effect on those whose over-

heated imaginations urge them to the wild excesses of enthusiasm.

Raising the dead is still a prospective effort, and is the subject of their prayers; but it will remain prospective, unless they intend to become *resurrectionists*. The dead are dangerous *subjects*, even for strong faith. Satan is over-acting his part in this Tragic-Comic scene. He is surely either asleep or on a journey, and has delegated his authority to some inexperienced Demon, who, proud of his elevation, and unused to wield the sceptre of Pandemonium, is driving all into confusion by his rashness. Minutius must be laid aside, and Fabius must resume the authority, or Rome is taken, pillaged, and destroyed.—Astonishing! I have just received information that Miss Mary actually attempted to restore to life her lately deceased brother, Samuel. She was in Glasgow when he died, and instead of hasting home to share the grief of a bereaved mother, and assist her in the mournful duties of such a season, she remained two days, in order to make the case similar to that of the raising of Lazarus. She was confident of accomplishing her object, and wrote to a friend that *the glory of God would be seen in her brother's being restored to life*. Her friends in Helensburgh, too, were so certain that the miracle would be performed, that even on the day of the funeral they expected intelligence of her success, and were sadly humbled on account of her *want of faith*, when they ascertained that their presence was still necessary to perform the last sad duty to the departed. This worthy young man, who died, not in Miss Mary's faith, but in the faith of the gospel, was, when alive, neglected by that impostor, though for *her own glory*, she would willingly have restored him to life. I have known individuals for days in the house, without hearing his name mentioned by Miss Mary; and shortly before his death, when, disturbed by excessive noise, he made an effort to reach her room, and requested that he might be allowed to die in peace—her answer discovers more of the fiend than of the sister: "Get thee hence, Satan,

for thou savourest not the things which be of God, but the things which be of men." Of old, Samuel appeared with heavy tidings, and were brother Samuel now to rise from the dead, he would have a message for Miss Mary, which would make her ears tingle. Give me a sister that has the faith of the gospel, and she will have a heart that can feel for a brother under affliction, and a hand ready to relieve from *oppressive domestic toils* a grief-worn mother, who, in the anguish of bereavement, may say of her family—"Deep and heavy, one by one, they drop." Such a sister, while she has all that can be called becoming in the practice of Miss Mary, will possess none of her extravagancies. She will be the same in all times and seasons, without any of that arch hypocrisy which accomodates its possessor to times and circumstances.

As Miss Mary wishes to imitate all that the Apostles have done, she has attempted to imitate the example of Peter, by falling into trances. A friend of mine, who is one of the initiated, was present with her when she lay for an hour in one of these pretended trances; during which time her lips occasionally moved, although she uttered no sound, and at intervals she opened her eyes, and turned them upwards. This is easily accounted for. Miss Mary's high occasional excitements exhaust both mind and body, and a calm languor naturally succeeds. Feeling, when in this state, a total abstraction from the world around her, and being quite unconscious of every thing external, the vividness of her imagination, always roaming after unseen things, causes her to fancy that she is holding immediate converse with the invisible world. This impression may, by continued repetition, take such a firm hold of her mind, that her reveries, which are in fact nothing more than the offspring of an overheated imagination, may appear even to her own mind, to have all the force of reality. Every one who has been in a state of high mental excitement, must have felt after it this abstraction from external objects, this blank in the mind; and in such a state it is easy to picture to the imagination,

the heavens opened, and the realities of eternity unfolded to the view. Enthusiasts have frequently pretended to fall into trances. The case of Mahomet is well known. He was subject to epileptic fits, and in order to conceal his disease, he pretended that these fits were trances, and that when under them, he was permitted to hold intimate intercourse with the Deity, and received from Gabriel what he impiously termed revelations.

Miss Mary, too, pretends to receive immediate revelations from Heaven, even without trances. An instance of this occurred a few weeks ago. She had been earnestly engaged in prayer, along with one of the *Brethren*, for the conversion of a Turk who is at present in this country, and who intends to return in a short time to Egypt. In relating the circumstance, she said that even before they had risen from their knees, they knew that their prayer had been heard, and were assured that it would be answered in the conversion of the Turk. To use her own words: "We know that we have already got what we asked." This she could know by no other method than by a direct revelation.—Is the Turk converted? I may, with the utmost confidence, answer in the negative; and if so, the pretended revelation could not be from God. But it is unnecessary to treat the subject with so much gravity. In all ages of the church there have been enthusiasts, who pretended to have secret revelations from heaven, and these revelations have invariably been found to be impostures.

Not content with trances and open revelations, the modern enthusiasts carry the matter still farther, and practise a kind of divination, somewhat resembling the *Sortes Homericæ* and *Sortes Virgilianæ* of the ancient Heathens.—Among the Greeks and Romans, the manner of practising this was by opening Homer or Virgil, and regarding the passage that first presented itself, as a prophecy or a divine direction. The Jews had a somewhat similar mode of divining, which they termed *Bath-kol*. Instead of opening a book, as the Heathens did, they took their oracle from the

first words they heard a person pronounce. The Christians, when their religion lost its primitive purity, adopted this manner of divination from the Heathens, using the New Testament instead of Homer or Virgil. This practice appears as ancient as Austin, who lived in the fourth century; it was practised in France for several centuries, on the consecration of a Bishop; and was introduced into England at the time of the conquest.

The *Bath-kol* of the Gareloch enthusiasts is rather different. Instead of opening the Bible, and taking the first passage that presents itself, they, according to their own account, pray to God to direct them to a passage suited to the occasion, and the Holy Ghost suggests to their mind a particular passage, which foretells the event they wish to know, or directs them in their proceedings. To give a more correct statement of the matter: they first fix on a passage which they think will suit the occasion, then turn it up, and say that it is "*a message from God,*" and that the Spirit has communicated it to them. This is most ridiculous, and it is not less astonishing than true, that many individuals, of the highest respectability, implicitly believe that such absurdities are really sanctioned by heaven.

One absurdity prepares the mind to receive another. The same faith which had raised Miss M'Donald and Miss Campbell from a sick-bed; they would naturally suppose would produce similar effects on others, and their efforts were next directed to the curing of the lame. Sanguine in their expectations of Divine interposition, and resolved to equal, if not surpass, the famous miracle performed by Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, they commenced this part of their operations in Helensburgh. The subject selected for the first display of their wonder-working faith, was a young man in that village, who has been for several years so lame that he cannot walk a dozen yards without the aid of his crutches. This young man was conveyed to the principal Inn in the village; and after prayers

had been offered by different individuals, that the Lord would manifest himself by interposing in his behalf, he was asked if he had faith to be healed, and told, that if he had faith, he would be healed. The lad answered, that he hoped he had faith; but the event shewed that either his faith or that of the *miracle-mongers* had not been strong enough, for after the matter had been discussed, and several attempts made, it was found that he was obliged to have recourse to his crutches to enable him to walk out of the room, and to this hour he continues as lame as ever.

The writer of a letter in one of the Glasgow Journals, contradicts the above story, and denies that any attempt was made to cure the lad. This, however, is vain. The story may have been told formerly with some additional circumstances which were not strictly correct, but this does not invalidate the leading fact. As to fifteen different versions of the story having been told, and none of them fully correct, as the lad is reported to have said, this is easily accounted for. The account of any occurrence may be substantially correct, although circumstantially incorrect. Scarcely a single story is told by any two persons in exactly the same manner; this, however, does not prove that the story thus told is false. Some of the transactions of our Saviour's history are recorded by each of the four Evangelists in a different manner with regard to circumstances, although substantially the same as to the principal occurrence. It is thus in the case before us. The principal fact of the story is, that a meeting was held for the purpose of performing a miraculous cure on the lad, and that the attempt was unsuccessful. This was the leading statement in the whole of the fifteen versions, and in this they all agreed. The truth of this statement cannot be denied, and any attempt to prove it false, from the incorrectness of one or two accompanying circumstances, is mere trifling. A friend of mine heard a full account of the lad's statement to the two persons who "crossed the Clyde to *probe the business to the bottom*," and from one of themselves, before their letter was published;

and even from this account it was evident that the cure had been attempted. Had they published the whole account of the transaction, as they got it from the lad, even when, as the clergyman, of whose congregation he is a member, informed me, he was so harassed by their proceedings, as almost to be induced to prevaricate, it would have had made the affair still more ridiculous, but *they have suppressed the one half of it, and published only what suited their purpose.* The *Brethren* and *Sisters*, however, do not thank them for the trouble they have been at, as none of them deny the fact; and one of them told a gentleman of my acquaintance, that they had managed the matter in part, for the lad actually did walk a few steps, but faith failing, his lameness returned. I conversed lately with one of the *Sisters* who was present at the meeting, and she expressly acknowledged that an attempt had been made to cure the lad, and had proved unsuccessful on account of the want of faith. On my remonstrating with her on the folly of such proceedings, she very gravely told me, that the world would soon see *greater things than these*, and that their failure in this instance was no proof that they would not in future succeed, for the Apostles themselves, on account of their want of faith, sometimes failed in working miracles. Were it not that I sincerely sympathise with the young man who has been made the dupe of these *faithless believers*, I would tell them, with a smile of contempt at their pretensions, that all the faith they can call into action, will never convert Trochees into Spondees. The following circumstance will shew how confident they are that they will yet be enabled to perform miraculous cures:—Miss Campbell some time ago remarked, that it was astonishing how many cures our Saviour performed while he was on the earth: in every town or village through which he passed, there were multitudes brought to be healed; and after our Lord's ascension, many sick persons were laid on the streets, that they might be healed by the Apostles in passing. To this, one of the

Brethren, a student of Divinity, answered, "*It will soon be the same again.*"

Having failed to perform a miracle in Helensburgh, the initiated changed the scene of their operation. Another attempt, as impious and as *successful*, was made in Port-Glasgow by two of the *Sisterhood*. Of this I have obtained an authentic account from a friend, whose letter I shall insert. The signature is not given, for the same reason which was formerly mentioned, but as the account was got from the mother of the girl on whom the miracle was attempted, the most fastidious may easily satisfy themselves of the correctness of the statements. Who the ladies were is not correctly known. It is whispered that one of them is related to a certain Noble Duke, but I hope, for the honour of our Scottish Nobility, that the report is false. I am aware, however, that a lady of high rank is one of the initiated.

PORT-GLASGOW, 27th May, 1830.

Dear Sir,

The following account of the attempted miraculous cure of Margaret Manners is substantially correct.

One forenoon lately, two elegantly dressed females called at Mr. Manners' shop, and mentioned that they were going to Glasgow in the steam-boat, and wished to rest a little till the boat came forward. On being requested to sit down, they immediately enquired concerning the girl, who, they had been told, was very ill in the house.— They were told the particulars of her complaint by Mrs. Manners. They then requested to be shewn to her apartment, as they wished to see her, and have some conversation with her. Mrs. M. hesitated, but, with the greatest earnestness, they repeated their request. She then shewed them in; and upon entering, each of the ladies pulled a New Testament from her pocket, and began to read the account of the miracle performed by Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. After the passage was read, one of them, in the name of Jesus, commanded the Devil to come out of the girl; upon which the girl, with the greatest *naivete*, told them to go first and cast the Devil out of Margaret Fairlie, (a neighbour's daughter who is confined with a similar disease.) The other lady, with the most solemn utterance then said,

“Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee ; in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, arise and walk.” Notwithstanding all this, the girl remained stationary, and the ladies, seeing no appearance of her rising, offered a most earnest prayer that the Lord Jesus would exert his Omnipotence, and cure her. Mrs. Manners began to get terrified at their singular proceedings, and on giving her husband a sign, he left the room, but immediately returned and informed his visitors that the steam-boat was at the quay. This put an end to the blasphemous farce, and they left the house, muttering as they went out, that they had no doubt the girl would have arisen, had not Mrs. Manners prevented her.

I may mention that the preceding account was told me by Mrs. Manners herself.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

Rev. A. Robertson, }
Greenock. }

A cause adequate to produce miraculous effects in one instance, may, in its operation, produce others of a similar nature. The faith sufficient to cure disease may produce any other desired effect. The *Sisterhood*, not having met with sufficient encouragement in this country for their extravagancies, entertained views of a Missionary enterprise, and resolved to visit foreign countries, where they might without opposition, preach *their* gospel. This soon became a favourite idea. The want of languages, however, was felt to be a serious obstacle. The active mind of Miss Mary brooded over this difficulty, and soon found an expedient for its removal. The gift of tongues, she knew, had been conferred on the church in the primitive ages of Christianity, and as there was no account of its having been withdrawn, she readily concluded that the cause of its being so long dormant was only the want of faith. She believed that the Spirit was in her as perfectly as it was in the Apostles, and as she possessed the same faith that they and the primitive believers possessed, what could she do but conclude as a necessary consequence, that she was as able to speak in

tongues as they were? The Messrs. M'Donald had been in India, and Miss Mary had done more than *peeped* into the Alphabets of languages. The elements were thus collected, and it only required sufficient excitement to develop the absurdities of speaking *unknown* tongues.

I have received from different individuals, specimens of the sounds she utters, and they are nearly similar. The habit of speaking produces greater variety, and with a very small vocabulary of sounds intermixed, she can, when excited, entertain her admirers. Several of the *Sisterhood* are now speaking this *language*, and any lady who wishes to attain the gift, may by transposing the words, construct from them very musical stanzas; thus:

Hey ammei hasan alla do,

Hoc alos leore;

Has heo masan amor ho,

Ti prov his aso me.

CHORUS—Hey ho! ammei, ammei!

As this is exceedingly euphonious, it may become useful in after times as a lullaby; and if well sung, with a piano-forte or harp accompaniment, it will undoubtedly have a most somniferous effect. The chorus, "Hey ho, &c.," can be set to notes most expressive of languor. *Heigh ho!*

Those who choose may sing or play it to the air of "Donald, a celebrated Scotch Ballad, sung by Miss Stephens, and arranged for the piano-forte." The stanza will then run thus:

Hey ammei hasan alla do,

Hoc alos leore;

Has heo masan amor ho,

Ti prov his aso me—Hasan.

Ho ame has ti calisa,

Huyaso leminu;

Hey ho! alassan fater ha,

Ti heo musitu—Hasan.

The translation may be supposed to be the first stanza of the abovementioned ballad.

The same effort of mind necessary for speaking *unknown* languages, would easily confer the ability to write them.— Any marks serve for *characters*, and Miss Mary has now become so expert in making curved and zig-zag lines, that, to use her own words to a worthy Clergyman of my acquaintance, she writes *unknown* languages “*like lightning, like lightning.*”^{*} This rapidity is astonishing to her friends; not knowing the expertness of stenographic writers, who form characters representing ideas, with greater rapidity than Miss Mary can jot down even her random scrawls.

Error may assume the appearance of truth, but it is, in general, easily detected. A miracle is never performed without some great end in view. When the gift of tongues was bestowed, the Apostles not only understood the languages with which they were gifted, but in them they could declare the wonderful works of God, to strangers from every nation under heaven. They did not speak unintelligible mystic sounds. The languages which they spoke, were as well understood by themselves as their vernacular tongue, and were fully understood by the strangers then in Jerusalem. This was a miracle which none could gainsay or resist. These strangers were probably men of influence from their talents or wealth, and they were addressed in a manner which could not fail to impress their hearts. It was “home, sweet home,” with its thousand delightful associations of love and tenderness, in the language connected with

* A fac-simile of part of these *unknown* languages is given at the end of the volume. It is all taken from an original, with the exception of the last three characters, which are from a copy. The original is in my possession, and the person from whom I procured it, saw it written by Miss Mary. The strokes are not so bold as those she generally makes, as she could not find a good pen at the time the writing Spirit possessed her fancy and her fingers, but was obliged to use a stubborn lead pencil. It is necessary to be thus circumspect in mentioning particulars, as one of the *sisterhood*, to whom I shewed the original writing, attempted to deny its genuineness.

their dearest recollections, and through it many were that day so affected, that they became the harbingers of the gospel messengers, to prepare the minds of their countrymen to receive the glad tidings of salvation. All this was sealed by a stupendous miracle, which, while it was gratifying to these strangers, by associations of a pleasing kind, was as convincing as if before them the dead had been raised to life. Besides the glad news which these strangers had heard, and which they could tell their countrymen, they saw before them men instantaneously prepared to evangelise the world. All these circumstances, connected with recent occurrences, produced powerful effects, and three thousand souls were added to the church; but the manifestation of the Spirit's power on that day, direct and indirect, will not be fully known, till we hear of its glorious results in the history of redemption, around the throne of God.

A similar gift of tongues is supposed to be communicated to the initiated in the Gareloch mysteries. Grant it—what effect does it produce? *Wonder*. Wondering, however, is not the way to become wise. These things may make adherents gape, and furnish *tell-tale* ladies with *something new*, even in these *spirit-stirring* times, when our ears are kept erect by harangues on Pardon, Peccability, Millenarianism, with their long train of a thousand minor errors. Is the church edified by these pretended languages? Is a gain-saying world convinced, or the mouth of the scoffer stopped? Can those who never heard the glad sound of the gospel, be instructed in the wonderful works of God? No end can possibly be accomplished by an unintelligible *gibberish*, which nobody understands; and Miss Mary may travel from California to Japan, from Australasia to Greenland, but not a single idea can her *unknown languages* communicate to a human being.

Nothing better distinguishes between a true and a pretended communication from heaven, than the outward effects which they produce. Those who delivered the responses of the Heathen Oracles were thrown into the most violent

agitation. The Spirit of God operates calmly. "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." Not a single hint is ever dropped in the Bible of the operation of the Spirit producing uncommon emotion. On the day of Pentecost, indeed, some of the Jews, when they heard the Apostles speak in tongues, said, "these men are full of new wine." This however, does not prove that they were agitated, nor does it even imply that they exhibited any signs of emotion. An intoxicated person is talkative and incoherent in his expressions, muttering indistinctly. To this peculiarity they refer. They could not understand them, and their language seemed as unintelligible as that of a person who had drunk plentifully of wine; and, like one in that state, they were immoderately talkative. This is the amount of the expression. In imagination, view the scene. The inspired Apostles are calm; and, surrounded with strangers from every part of the known world, they address these strangers, and wonderful, no doubt, is the desire to instruct on the one hand, and to hear on the other. To the inhabitants of Jerusalem, all is as the confusion of Babel. Hearing the Apostles utter sounds to which they can attach no idea, they naturally mistake the being filled with the Spirit, for being filled with wine. Peter mildly answers the charge, and in a temperate and judicious sermon, in which he does not evince even his usual impetuosity, proves that he and his companions, though under the immediate influence of the Spirit, were in the calm possession of their faculties. The supposed drunkenness, therefore, arose entirely from the strange language in which they spoke, and not from any emotion of mind, or agitation of body. Had the Apostles been all in the same frantic mood as Miss Mary is under her high-wrought enthusiasm, terrible would have been the uproar, and terrific the scene. It was not so, however. It was a scene of wonder, and what is more, it was not a *wondering without knowledge*.

Miss Mary had fixed her desires on one of the gifts bestowed on the Apostles and primitive Christians, and by her

faith she fancied she had obtained it, and thus became the wonder of the party. The faith, however, which could do this, might, by stretching it a little, do much more. The Messrs M'Donald were now in the shade, and they resolved to eclipse Miss Mary, that they might not dwindle into *satellites*; for like Cesar, they would rather be the first in a village than the second in Rome. Miss Mary had not received the gift of interpretation, and finding from the epistle to the Corinthians, that speaking of tongues and interpretation were different gifts, they had the ungallant audacity to aspire to what Miss Mary had not yet attained. Partners in trade, they continued their partnership in miracles; and the one interpreted what the other spoke. This was an achievement of no ordinary kind, and left Miss Mary to gape with astonishment over her unmeaning symbols; while the rest of the company were as *sleeping partners*, and the two Brothers, as active partners, transacted business to the entire satisfaction of all concerned. A friend of mine heard an extract read from a letter of one of the gifted *Brothers*, relating the manner in which the Spirit had first descended upon them; in which he mentioned that the power of the Lord had been mighty among them—that his brother had been inspired to speak in an *unknown* tongue—and after some time he himself had been enabled to interpret—but the interpretations were only given at intervals, and in short sentences, such as, “A weeping Jesus”—“Ho, every one that thirsteth,” &c. At one of their meetings, at which Mr. E—— was present, while one of the brothers were engaged in prayer, a sound was heard, as of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the house, and he suddenly started up and poured forth a rhapsody of his dark sayings, which the other immediately interpreted in these words: “The shout of a *King* is among us.” This, it must be allowed, was very appropriate, and at least showed the young man's ingenuity. It is not said, however, that Mr. E—— actually shouted, but the rest of the company vociferated so immoderately, that they were heard at a considerable distance;

and when the shout ceased, *the Spirit was heard rushing out at the window!*

Speaking *gibberish* is an easy matter, and great expertness in it may be acquired by any one who has time to lose, and folly enough to make the attempt. A friend of mine is acquainted with a gentleman in London, who, in his idle moments, amuses himself with this practice, and he has become so expert in it, that he speaks with the greatest fluency, for hours; to the no small astonishment of ignorant people and children. This acquirement, however, is generally in the possession of idiots, or of those who, from a superabundance of imagination, are weak in intellect. I have heard an individual in Glasgow, who received a wound in the head while in the service of Buonaparte, speak a variety of continental languages, jumbled together; and from continued repetition, his fluency was not less astonishing than his euphonious mixture of different sounds. Idiocy or a distempered imagination, is the natural soil for *unknown* languages. Every thing done by the Apostles and primitive Christians, the wonder-working brothers must pretend to, but in this they have left far behind those they attempt to imitate. In the primitive ages there were no *unknown tongues*, as the modern enthusiasts apply the phrase, nor interpreting in the manner which they practise. The passage on which the new discovery of speaking and interpreting is founded, is the fourteenth chapter of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. I need not trouble the reader with the original. In our translation the word *unknown* is printed in Italics, to shew that it is not in the Greek; and it is supplied properly, if we do not pervert its legitimate use. The individuals who could speak these tongues, had, in the most of cases, the gift of interpretation; and in every case the language spoken was intelligible to the speaker; and if he could not himself interpret or translate it into the language of those who were present, it was interpreted by some other individual who understood both languages. Suppose a number of believers met at Corinth, some of whom understood one lan-

guage, and some another. The spirit, for the edification of the Church, conferred upon certain individuals the power of speaking several languages. If one person, for instance, was gifted with the power of speaking Hebrew, or any other language which the majority of the assembly did not understand, he could, if he was acquainted with the language of those whom he addressed, translate what he said into their language, that they might be edified. If he was not acquainted with the language of those present, some other individual, who understood both languages, could interpret what he said, for the benefit of those who did not understand the language in which the first person spoke; in the same manner as an interpreter at Courts. To exemplify this, the speaking brother in Port-Glasgow should at least understand what he supposes the spirit has communicated; and as all who are present when he speaks understand English, he should translate what he says, that they may be edified. The interpreting brother, in like manner, should render the mystic sayings into different languages, suppose French, Spanish, &c.; so that were any present who understood these languages, and did not understand English, he could make known to them his brother's wonderful sayings. If there were no foreigners present, he should write the translation in these languages, that this supposed gift of tongues might be a sign "to those who believe not." This, however, is the sum of the whole matter: The one brother knows nothing of the sounds he utters—the other, if possible, knows still less; and what he calls interpretation, is merely repeating any passage of Scripture which first presents itself to his mind. Thus these two *wonderful* brothers are helpers to each other's faith, and *edify* the party with jargon. Altogether it is a most ridiculous farce, and reminds me of the well-known story of the two sailor boys. The master of a ship, walking on deck, called to one of his boys who was in the hold, "What are you doing there, Will?" "Nothing, Sir," says Will. "And what are you doing, Tom?" "Helping Will, Sir." It is thus with the Messrs. M'Do-

nald. The Speaker is doing nothing, and the Interpreter is helping him to do nothing; and thus the ignorant are made to gape with astonishment at these wonderful nonentities.

Ambition is insatiable in its desires. When the Messrs. M'Donald had continued for some time, assisting each other in the *good work*, one of the *Sisterhood*, reading that among the Coriuthians the gifts of speaking and interpreting were possessed by the same individual, resolved to attempt this hardy enterprise, and thus to accomplish what Miss Mary had not even attempted, and what required the united efforts of the two brothers. This was an undertaking of no ordinary magnitude, and the anxiety it caused in her breast before its developement, reduced her nearly to a skeleton; and her mind, naturally of a substantial texture, was almost overpowered by successive agitations. In private, among true friends, and of course, not the initiated, her body was in continued and varying motion, her breathing deep and frequent, and her eyes rolled in the true Fernicarry style. These, however, were only the "notes of preparation." At length the important day, big with mighty events, arrived; and among a few of the initiated, speaking and interpreting were, for the first time in Port-Glasgow, practised by the same individual, to the great *edification* of those who heard. The speaking of tongues had now come to a climax, having gone through three progressive stages; and after those present were *edified* and satisfied with the astonishing exhibition, the part, so well sustained, was concluded in tragic style, by the lady falling into a swoon; when the curtain dropped, and on the minds of the audience there was left an indelible impression.

Servants have become ambitious of equalling their superiors; and in one instance, a female servant having read the promise that the Lord would pour out his Spirit *on the handmaidens*, fancied that she was commissioned to manifest its fulfilment. At family worship in the parlour, she felt constrained to speak "the word of the Lord," but had the prudence to retire to the kitchen; and was found shortly

after in an earnest soliloquy in the *unknown* tongue, mightily pleased with her new acquirement, and greatly edifying the kitchen utensils.

I was much surprised, when this speaking and writing of *unknown* languages commenced, to hear some of the *Sisterhood* affirm that Dr. Reid of Glasgow had given a statement concerning a specimen which was shewn him, tending to confirm the belief that it was one of the Oriental languages. My surprise was encreased when a friend informed me that he had seen, in the possession of one of the *Sisters*, a written document, purporting to be a testimonial from that gentleman, to the same effect. Knowing that the Doctor is a distinguished linguist, and that his statement was made use of among the initiated to countenance their absurdities, I was anxious to ascertain what was really his opinion on the subject. I accordingly wrote to him for that purpose, and by his polite attention, I have been favoured with the following answer, which puts a decided *veto* to all the ridiculous statements that have been so industriously circulated in his name.

GLASGOW, May 22d, 1830.

Reverend Sir,

Your letter of the 19th came to hand yesterday. The specimen, concerning which you desire information, was altogether about the size of a duodecimo page, and was divided into two parts. The first, which occupied almost the whole, was simply the sounds uttered by Miss Campbell, expressed in English letters. The last was written by Miss Campbell, and occupied a space sufficient to contain an ordinary sentence, or a stanza of poetry.

The observations made upon the first part, had nothing to do with the second, nor the second with the first. By not attending to this, I fear they have perverted my meaning, and drawn conclusions which were never intended.

In considering the first part, we must keep in mind, that even the sounds vociferated by the raving maniac may be found in many languages. Some of the syllables under consideration, were not unlike those employed by the Chinese in speaking their language, but with-

out any order, or possibility of making from them one particle of sense. Then words, or rather sounds, followed, with terminations similar to the accusative plural, masculine, of Greek nouns ; but in this part also it was not in my power to form any meaning. Then some Latin adverbs made their appearance, without any connection, except what arose from juxta-position alone. Lastly, some of the syllables ended like the Saxon infinitives.

Such a jumble of incoherent sounds could only proceed from a mind deranged, or from a desire to talk nonsense, in order to please or amuse children. In short, the first part was "Rudis indigestaque molis."

Concerning Miss Campbell's specimen, it was not Chinese, for the marks, or rather scrawls, had no similarity to the symbols of that language. It was then enquired if they could be traced to any dialect whatever. I observed, that if there was any language to which they had the most distant resemblance, it was the running Persian hand, according to the Shekistck form. But again, it could not be this, for it is well known that the Persian is formed from right to left, whereas the specimen under consideration was written from left to right ; so that, before the comparison could be properly made, one of the specimens must be inverted, and then the fancied similarity vanishes.

How difficult it is to make falsehood assume the garb of truth, or the folly of fools appear as wisdom.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Yours with all respect,

(Signed) JOHN REID.

Rev. A. Robertson, }
Greenock.

But has not a specimen of Miss Campbell's *writing* been sent to Cambridge, for the inspection of the learned professors of that University ; and an answer returned, stating that the *writing* is Chinese ? A specimen was indeed sent to Cambridge, but it is not known that any answer has been returned by the person to whom it was sent—nor is it probable that it ever will. The gentleman, however, who sent the specimen to the University, has received an answer from a third person, who has *generously* volunteered his services

in the business, and who appears to have acquired a *spice* of the *all-gulping* credulity, which characterises *our* good people. This is the Curate of St. Martin's, Leicester; and I cannot better do him justice than by inserting his *wonderful* epistle, which has greatly revived the *spirits* of the initiated.

ST. MARTIN'S, LEICESTER, May 10, 1830.

Reverend Sir,

Having been last week in Cambridge, I heard from a friend an account of the wonderful events said to be going forward in your neighbourhood; and by a letter from Edinburgh the next morning, I learned that a paper had been forwarded to Professor Lee, in order to ascertain what language the enclosed was. I immediately, through a friend, borrowed your letter to Professor Lee, who gave his opinion, that it was not unlike Chinese characters, though he was not acquainted with that language himself. I therefore went with your letter to Mr. Myers of Trinity College, who is, I believe, the only man in Cambridge acquainted with the Chinese language, and he pronounced the writing to be Chinese characters immediately upon seeing it, though so badly written that he could not interpret it! We then went to the University Library, and compared Dr. Morrison's Dictionary and the Bible, and in addition to the testimony of Mr. Myers, from what I myself saw when comparing the writing with the Chinese characters, I am perfectly convinced of the writing being Chinese. I should feel obliged, therefore, by your letting me hear some particulars of what is going forward, when you can spare a few moments. I am sure you will excuse the liberty I have taken in addressing you. Believe me,

Reverend Sir,

Your affectionate Brother,

G. STRATON.

Rev. Mr. Wilkinson, }
Greenock.

P. S.—There are many persons both here and at Cambridge most anxious and interested in this business. Your kind communications will much oblige us.

This is, without exception, the most absurd letter I have

ever seen. Its testimony amounts to this: *Mr. Myers, the only man in Cambridge who is acquainted with the Chinese language, pronounced Miss Campbell's writing to be Chinese characters immediately upon seeing it, but notwithstanding this, he did not know what characters they were.* With all deference to Mr. Myers and the worthy Curate of St. Martin's, I must say, that this was impossible. Neither Mr. Myers nor any other man *could* know that the characters were Chinese, unless *he knew what they were.* For instance, were I presented with a paper having a mark, and to say that I knew the mark was one of the letters of the English Alphabet, but could not tell whether it was an S, an E, or an M, or what it was, a boy of ten years of age would at once perceive that I was uttering a gross contradiction. This is exactly the state of the matter in the case before us. It is vain to tell us, as some of the initiated have done, that we may know from the appearance of a piece of writing, that it is written in English, though the letters may be so ill formed, that we cannot decypher the writing. This does not apply to the case in question. Every mark or character in the Chinese language represents a word or idea, and consequently there are as many different marks or characters as there are words; so that it is impossible to know that any mark is a Chinese character, without at the same time knowing what character it is. I suspect, however, either that Mr. Myers has been imposed upon, or that *his statement has been misrepresented*, as I do not think any literary gentleman in Cambridge would utter such an absurdity.

This letter, though intended to settle the question, and confirm the faith of those who were wavering, has made the affair still more ridiculous. The Rev. Eustace Cary, a Missionary from Malacca, who is well acquainted with the Chinese and other Oriental languages, was in this town a short time ago, and on seeing an original specimen of Miss Campbell's *scrawls*, he said *it was not Chinese, nor did he think it was any language at all.* As I was desirous, however, to know the particulars concerning the letter from

Leicester, and the statements of Dr. Lee and Mr. Myers, I wrote to a literary friend near Sunderland, requesting him to enquire at these gentlemen concerning the business. He entrusted the commission to the Rev. Mr. Paterson, Minister of St. George's Chapel, Bishop-Wearmouth, and by the kindness of the latter gentleman I have been favoured with the following communications.

BISHOP-WEARMOUTH, 1st June, 1830.

Rev. and Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 18th ultimo to Mr. Cowan, has been, by him, put into my hands, with a request that I should attend to it, and endeavour to find for you the information you require. According to this request, I have written both to Leicester and Cambridge; and having received answers from both these places, I hasten to send you true copies. The first of the letters before me is from the Rev. Mr. Straton, Curate of St. Martin's, Leicester; the other from Dr. Lee, Professor of Arabic and Oriental languages, Cambridge.*

* * * * *

The letter of which the above is a copy, is signed "*The Curate of St Martin's, Leicester,*" without a name. It is, however, closed with a seal, having *arms—a shield and supporters*—such as a Commoner is not allowed to use; and the motto—"*Surgere tento.*" On consulting some books of heraldry, I find that the shield and motto belong to a family of the name of *Straton*; but how the Curate of St. Martin's comes to use *supporters* is yet a mystery to me. Mr. Archdeacon Vaughan, who died lately, was incumbent of St. Martin's—a most sincere, devoted, and exemplary Chris-

* Mr. Straton's letter I am not at liberty to publish, for reasons which will be seen from Mr. Paterson's communication. It is, however, of no importance to the question, being mostly a practical improvement of the evidences of the speedy approach of our Lord's personal advent, and the commencement of the Millenium. He acknowledges the genuineness of his letter to the Rev. Mr. Wilkinson.

tian ; a man of undoubted worth, and a most zealous minister of Christ, who would by no means have employed a Curate who was either a fool or a man of questionable piety. The Archdeacon, however, with all his worth, was quite an enthusiast on the subject of modern Millenarianism, and expected every hour the personal advent of Christ. The Curate is evidently full of the same sentiments, and appears to be on the look-out, and *wishing* for such events as are producing so much stir in your neighbourhood. While, therefore, I consider him perfectly honest, and worthy of all respect, I have no difficulty in seeing how far his judgment is to be trusted to in a case like the present. *His letter to me, you will observe is private, although he knows the purpose for which it was asked.* You are, of course, at full liberty to use the information contained in it as you think fit ; *but it would scarcely be correct and honourable to print it, without his express leave.*

The following is a copy of the letter from Dr. Lee of Cambridge.

CAMBRIDGE, May 30, 1830.

Reverend Sir,

Your letter of the 24th met me here a day or two ago, to which I intend replying in as few words as possible. It is very true that I said, on seeing the communication to which you refer, that it looked more like Chinese than any thing else I had seen. A similar letter had been sent to me a few weeks before, to which I returned a similar answer ; recommending at the same time, that it should be placed before a gentleman of my acquaintance, who is well versed in Chinese literature, and in reading Chinese manuscripts. His answer was that it was not Chinese, but might perhaps be Japanese, or some other such writing. The document you refer to did get into the hands of Mr. Myers, who is a promising beginner in Chinese, but I believe the result was, that he could make nothing whatever out of it.

These are the facts of the case ; now for a few opinions. For my own part, I believe that the person who writes the scrawls adverted to, has some time or other paid attention to the Chinese, or some other characters not unlike them ; because there is an air of imitation in some of the strokes, very likely to have come from such a source. In the next place, I have been credibly informed, that the

Authoress of these papers has access to such documents, now to be found in some family papers. If such papers exist within her reach, it would be worth while to have them brought out, for the purpose of ascertaining whether there is or is not any resemblance discernible between them and the documents in question. For my own part, supposing this to turn out to be the fact, which I suspect it will, I should not suppose that any wilful intention to impose has prompted the imitations in question to be made. I should only suppose, that the Authoress, labouring, it may be, under considerable nervous excitement, has been induced to believe, that what she once looked on as curious, and therefore worthy of her attention, has now become, in her hands, the work of inspiration. With regard to the scrawls themselves, for they deserve no better name, I am perfectly astonished that any one could for a moment suppose, either that they contain any thing legible, or that they can be the result of inspiration.

I am,

Reverend Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

(Signed) SAMUEL LEE.

Rev. J. T. Paterson,
Minister of St. George's Chapel,
Sunderland. }

With regard to the above letter from Dr. Lee, I asked it of him expressly for the purpose of meeting the case stated in your letter to Mr. Cowan. I think you may therefore use it freely. Nay, I think you may even print it, if you choose. You know well enough who and what Dr. Lee is, and will be guided by your own proper discretion in the matter.

Having thus been led to take a little more interest in these things than I might otherwise have done, I am now anxious for all the information I can get. It would be a special favour, therefore, if you would have the goodness to write me at your leisure.

I am, Reverend and Dear Sir,

With much brotherly affection,

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) JOHN T. PATERSON.

Rev. A. Robertson, }
Greenock. }

It is almost unnecessary to make a single remark on the above communications. The documents being furnished, the public must judge for themselves. The discrepancies observable between the statements contained in Mr. Straton's letter, and the narration of facts in Dr. Lee's subsequent letter to Mr. Paterson, I shall not attempt to reconcile.— Mr. Straton appears to be a truly pious, worthy man; but his Millenarian zeal has carried him too far. The public can easily decide whether the unbiassed communication of the learned professor, or that of a person prepossessed, and who, as Mr. Paterson observes, “appears to be wishing for such events,” is of greater weight. According to Mr. Straton's account, Mr. Myers is “*the only Chinese scholar in Cambridge;*” Dr. Lee, however, who certainly knows more about the *litterati* of Cambridge than Mr. Straton can do, says he is “*a promising beginner in Chinese.*” Mr. S. informs us that Mr. Myers “*pronounced the writing to be Chinese characters immediately upon seeing it;*” the Doctor says, that Mr. M. “*could make nothing whatever out of it.*” These discrepancies shew, that even the most pious men, may sometimes be hurried into rash statements, merely from the force of the impression made on their own minds by what they wish to be true.

I have not ascertained whether or not Miss Mary has access to Oriental Manuscripts, as Dr. Lee has been informed, though I have every reason to suppose that it is the case.— At all events, scraps of Chinese writing can be obtained at any tea warehouse, and those who are well acquainted with the proceedings of Missionary Societies, must have seen specimens of various Oriental languages. I have at present before me several pieces of writing in Chinese and Bengalese, procured from a friend in Glasgow. In Dr. Lee's charitable vindication of Miss Mary from any intention to deceive, I would willingly concur; but while I wish to indulge the charity which “*hopeth all things,*” I must add to this the discriminating charity which “*rejoiceth in the truth.*” Miss Mary appears to have first deceived herself; and then, either

unwilling to admit that she was wrong, or pleased with flattery, she has continued the deception, by deceiving her friends. I know that some of the *Sisterhood* have received instructions in Greek, and that Miss Mary herself has paid attention to languages, and particularly to Greek.— One of the first languages with which she pretended to be supernaturally gifted was Modern Greek. It is strange what *coincidences* sometimes happen. Two young gentlemen, natives of Greece, have for a considerable time, resided at Rosneath; and with them it is known that Miss Mary has had frequent conversations.

No two specimens of her *scrawls* have the same appearance; and though, in those she *at first wrote in retirement*, there may be an imitation of some characters which she has seen; in those she writes before others, from her hurried manner, the resemblance, of course, cannot be sustained. To those who may hereafter pretend to speak and write *unknown* languages, I would offer this advice; and as it may be a profitable speculation, I give it “under seal,” and “we go snacks.” Before commencing, practise writing passages from the Translations of the Scriptures in different languages, the less known the better for the purpose, till at least 100 texts can be thrown off correctly, “*like lightning, like lightning*,” and then there may be a reasonable hope entertained of deceiving not only Curates, but dignitaries of the Church; and not only “promising beginners in Chinese,” but even Leviathans in Oriental literature.

Before sending a specimen of Fernicarry *unknown tongue* to Cambridge, several of the initiated had resolved on a Missionary voyage, and “if the Lord would,” had fixed on Greece as the scene of their first operations. Miss Mary was best acquainted with the language of that country, and no doubt she had heard of the frisking goats—the Delphian Oracle—the tripod—the divine afflatus; and she probably expected to confound *her acquaintance*, by attacking him in his former favourite residence.

After the writing had been sent to Cambridge, they were

so confident of success in the application, that they resolved to fix their destination according to the decision of the *literati* of that University. A short time ago I saw some of them, and they have now determined to go to the South Sea Islands, and are waiting "the Lord's permission." A gentleman celebrated among them, on mentioning the circumstance to an acquaintance of mine, said he had no doubt, that as soon as they arrived at their destination, the necessary language would be communicated to them, and they would be enabled to declare to the natives "the wonderful works of God."—I am astonished that such *believers* should make any preparations for a voyage; can they not, by one bold act of *faith*, transport themselves to their place of destination? and since by their *faith* they can obtain a language, why may they not by the same means obtain every thing else requisite? The truth is: one delay has prepared them for another, and I suspect they will yet find it "*for the glory of God*," to "remain in the pleasant plains of Sodom and Gomorrah;" (I use their own uncharitable, detestable cant) and among "a race diseased from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, with a foul and spreading leprosy;" and to continue to hear a gospel, which, they tell us, "*has been hatched in the lowest depths of hell!*" They are excellent at explaining, concealing, and equivocating, and whining out their anathemas in hallowed phrase; and from the specimen given in the church courts, without the harmlessness of doves, they have the cunning of serpents; and even Clergymen who have countenanced these pretended miracles, and declared them from the pulpit to be "the wonderful works of God," will resist, explain, and retract, and all for the sake of "a morsel of bread;" and will not yield "the loaves and fishes," till "*the Brethren cast them out*," and thus prevent them any longer from eating the children's bread.

I lately had an interview with some of the initiated, and on remonstrating with them on the folly of their pretensions, they told me that they were *believers*, and referred me to the concluding verses of Mark's gospel, to learn what signs would follow those who believed. Their theory is, that

those who believe will be saved, and as surely as salvation is connected with believing, so surely are the signs enumerated in these verses to follow on believing. In this there is a combination of truth and error. Faith and salvation are *necessarily* connected as cause and effect; but faith and working miracles are only *circumstantially* connected. Faith is, in every age, connected with salvation; but it is not, in every age, connected with the power of working miracles. A commission is given to the Apostles—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." To this commission two promises are added—1st. "He that believeth shall be saved;" and 2d. "These signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils," &c. These promises are both given in a general manner, and the extent of their application must be fixed from other passages of Scripture, and from a knowledge of facts. From the general bearing of Scripture we know that the application of the first is universal, as salvation is *necessarily* connected with faith. The second promise, viz. the power of working miracles, has no connection with faith beyond the primitive ages, and in these ages the promise was fulfilled, for we are told "the Apostles went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." No such signs, or miracles, however, followed faith in after ages, because the power to perform them was *only an adventitious circumstance, and not a necessary consequence of faith.*

None of the initiated ever doubt that they have justifying faith, and if miraculous signs necessarily follow this faith, why do they not shew the signs enumerated in the passage? If they do not shew these signs, they have not the faith which saves the soul; for according to their view of the passage, assurance of salvation is no more a necessary consequence of faith than these signs are, and if they want the one, they *may* want both. When pressed with this difficulty, they say that it is owing to the want of faith that they cannot shew the signs; but this is a contradiction. They are conscious of believing, and are *sure* of salvation, and therefore they

cannot want faith, since the same faith which is connected with assurance of salvation, is, according to them, as necessarily connected with miraculous signs. The truth is—they *suppose* that they are conscious of believing, and hence their assurance of personal salvation, because it is a future object connected with eternity; and they are also conscious that they can shew miraculous signs, but this, when brought to the test of evidence, proves a delusion. If they would, therefore, apply this passage, even in its perverted sense, they would find in it a death-warrant to their system. Signs do not follow *their* faith, and therefore, according to their own shewing, they have not the faith to which the promise of salvation is given—and “He that believeth not shall be damned.” If they, therefore, will cling to their perversion of this passage, they must not only forego *assurance*, but even the *hope* of salvation. If they rest their assurance of personal salvation on the consciousness of believing, and also their assurance of shewing miraculous signs on the same act of the mind; if evidence satisfies them that they are mistaken in the one case, is it not probable that their assurance in the other is unfounded, and should likewise be referred to *evidence*?

From the opposition which the Gareloch Enthusiasts at first met with in propagating their absurdities, they raised the out-cry of *persecution*; because, forsooth, they were not allowed to have every thing their own way. I have seen them, when their sentiments were opposed, turn their eyes upwards to heaven, and exclaim, “If ye live godly in the world, ye must suffer persecution.” Paul was persecuted for the gospel’s sake, and what was the nature of his persecution? Hear his own account of the matter: “Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned;” &c. Which of them has been called to suffer this kind of persecution? Which of them has suffered the persecution to which the primitive Christians were subjected under Nero, Domitian, &c.? Some of them are now, however, changing their sentiments, and one of them lately told me that they were not sufficiently

persecuted. This, strange as it may appear, is natural. They perceive that their pretensions are regarded with contempt, and their minds have been hardened to such a degree of obstinacy, that they would willingly suffer the most violent opposition, rather than be allowed to sink into insignificance by cold neglect. It is more agreeable to the proud mind to encounter open animosity than the bitter sneer of derision; and the minds of some of them are so filled with indignation at the universal contempt which is manifested towards their ridiculous extravagances, that I have no doubt they would willingly submit to a violent death in defence of their principles.

A secret revenge lurks in their breasts towards their opponents, and to gratify this, the Prince of Darkness has instigated them to prophecy destruction to those, who, because they oppose their absurd views, are denominated the enemies of God. Some of them, impiously imitating the example of our Saviour at Jerusalem, have pronounced the most awful judgments of God against the inhabitants of Port-Glasgow! On reasoning with one of them on the dreadful impiety of such conduct, and the want of charity which it displayed, the answer was, "They deserve it—God will avenge his own cause. I grant that some of them may be saved, but it will be as if by fire." Nothing can shew in a stronger light the shocking nature of the system than this—that it has implanted such demoniacal feelings in the breasts of ladies, formerly susceptible of every tender impression, and glowing with Christian charity. The mind sickens at such a lamentable change. The hearts of those persons must have arrived at no ordinary degree of callousness, who can, with a fiend-like complacency, doom to destruction those whom they formerly loved, respected, and honoured.

Many pious individuals are not a little alarmed at the modern perversions of Christianity, and seem to think that such absurd extravagancies, if not speedily suppressed, will gradually undermine true religion. This, however, is an ungrounded fear. Pretensions as ridiculous, and

extravagancies as absurd, have in almost every age of Christianity found abettors. This may be seen by enumerating a few of the religious delusions recorded in church history.

In the thirteenth century a numerous sect, who called themselves "Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit," gained ground in Italy, France, and Germany. They professed a species of mysticism, and supposed that every man, by the power of contemplation, might be united to the Deity in an ineffable manner, and become one with the source and Parent of all things; and that they who, by long and assiduous meditation, had, as it were, plunged themselves into an abyss of the Divinity, acquired thereby a glorious liberty; and were not only delivered from the violence of sinful lusts, but even from the common instincts of nature, and freed from the obligation of all laws, human and divine. They rejected with horror every kind of industry and labour, as an obstacle to divine contemplation, and to the ascent of the soul towards the Father of Spirits.

Jacob Behmen, a shoemaker in Upper Lusatia, who lived in the latter part of the sixteenth century, pretended to secret revelations, and attracted a number of followers.—According to his own account, he was led, by considering that promise of our Saviour, "*My Father which is in heaven will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him,*" to desire the promised Comforter; and, continuing in this earnestness, he was at last, he tells us, "surrounded with a divine light for seven days, and stood in the highest contemplation and kingdom of joys." After this, he was again surrounded by the Divine light, and replenished with the heavenly knowledge, to such a degree, that when he went abroad into the fields, and viewed the herbs and grass, by his inward light he was enabled to discern their essences, use, and properties, which were discovered to him by their lineaments, figures, and signatures. Ten years afterwards, he had a third special illumination, wherein still farther mysteries were revealed to him. These revelations he committed to

writing and published. The last words he uttered were, "Now I go hence into Paradise."

The Isbraniki, a denomination of Christians who appeared in Russia about the year 1666, maintained that there is no subordination of rank among the faithful, and that a Christian may even kill himself for the love of Christ.

In the same year, the celebrated impostor, Sabbetai Levi, made his appearance at Smyrna, pretending to be the Messiah. He was followed by thousands of deluded wretches, who carried their enthusiasm to such a degree, that all business was laid aside; every thing superfluous was sold, that the poor might be provided for; and those who had never practised devotion till then, became devout and penitent.—The penances they imposed upon themselves were shocking. Some fasted so long, that they were famished; others buried themselves in the earth till their limbs grew stiff; some would endure melting wax dropped on their flesh; some rolled in snow; and many whipped themselves. In Smyrna four hundred men *and women received the gift of prophecy*, and foretold the future greatness of the impostor's kingdom. Some of them *fell into trances*, foamed at the mouth, talked exultingly of their future prosperity, their visions of the Lion of Judah, and the triumphs of Sabbetai. Being urged by the people to shew some miracle to confirm their faith, and to convince the Gentiles, Sabbetai was rather puzzled, for he does not seem to have possessed the *faith* of our Gareloch friends. The credulity of his deluded followers, however, soon supplied this defect. When Sabbetai was before the Cadi, some affirmed that *they saw a pillar of fire between him and the Cadi*; and when some had affirmed it, others swore that it was true; and it was immediately believed by all the Jews in Smyrna. It would be endless to enumerate the absurdities practised by Sabbetai and his followers.—Having proved his Messiahship to the satisfaction of the Jews in Smyrna, he declared that he was called of God to visit Constantinople. When he arrived in that city, the Vizier ordered him to be thrown into prison, where he lay for some time. At length the Grand Seignior sent for him,

and required that he should verify his pretensions by showing a miracle. The miracle which the grand Seignior proposed was, that Sabbetai should be stripped naked, and set as a mark for his archers to shoot at; and, if the arrows did not pierce his flesh, he would acknowledge him to be the Messiah. Sabbetai had not *faith* enough to make the trial; and to avoid death, he embraced the Mahometan religion. Such, however, was the obstinacy of his deluded adherents, that some of them affirmed that it was not Sabbetai himself, but his shadow, that professed the Turkish faith, and that his body was taken to heaven, and should be sent down again when God thought fit.

About the year 1783 a silly enthusiastic woman of the name of Buchan made her appearance in Glasgow. She pretended to be the woman spoken of in the Revelation; and declared that all who believed in her should be taken to heaven without tasting of death, *as the end of the world was near*. She was joined by several respectable individuals, and among others, by Mr. Hunter, writer, and the Rev. Mr. Whyte, a dissenting clergyman. The poor woman died however, contrary to her own expectations and those of her adherents; and this event put an end to their hopes of reaching the New Jerusalem without death.

The pretensions of Joanna Southcote are well known. She not only pretended to have secret revelations from heaven, but actually published her prophecies, which none of the Gareloch *Illuminati*, I think, will ever venture to do. She was followed by several thousand persons; many of them most respectable, and among others three established clergymen, who were denominated her "three witnesses."

The principles of Joanna have been lately revived in the south. About two months ago, the town of Birmingham was visited by two characters, the one of whom is named Twort, and said to be a fishmonger from Walworth; the name of the other *gentleman* is not known. Twort professes to be the real Shiloh, and his companion, the Lord's messenger. They acknowledge Joanna to have been only an instrument in the hands of God, and a mere forerunner of the present

impudent pretender. Twort has doomed three individuals to death, for refusing to deliver to him the papers of the late impostor. This, however, can be accounted for without supposing that the fishmonger's predictions hastened their end. The sect profess to be a sort of Millenarians, and Shiloh and his companions are supposed to be delegated by heaven to introduce the thousand years of happiness and innocence. The eminent characters mentioned in the New Testament are said to be but types of these great men; and Shiloh is supposed to be the very substance of Jesus Christ, who was originally a mere shadow of this impostor. The great Apostle of the Gentiles is represented by a snuff-dealer in Birmingham, who has turned his children out of doors for not exhibiting the same insanity as himself.

By some Christians the exposure of the absurdities of the Gareloch Enthusiasts will be deemed unnecessary. The authors of them, they may say, will sink into insignificance; and their follies be chronicled among the out-breakings of a distempered imagination. A formal exposure is giving to them an importance which they do not merit, and which, had they remained unnoticed, they would never have obtained. Such objectors do not know the nature of the enthusiasm opposed, the respectability of those by whom it has been countenanced, nor the extent of their success in religious society, especially among those who move in the higher spheres of life. Around religious enthusiasts there is always a hallowed air of earnest and persuasive piety; and they have so much cunning as to proceed stage by stage, and use every insinuating art to engage the affections. It is so with the Gareloch Enthusiasts. Their fervour gives them a captivating earnestness, and in proselytising they condemn "the Religion of the Land," and thus produce doubts in the unstable, and fears in the timorous. Using every means to secure the avenues to the heart, even many worthy Christians endure their extravagancies, from respect to the apparent piety displayed in their ordinary actions. Some pity their extravagancies, and finding in them much

which they approve, by degrees they embrace even their absurdities, from the operation of feelings directed entirely towards piety, and blinded so as not to be able to discriminate between genuine heartfelt piety, and piety assumed to conceal the workings of the natural mind, under the influence of an overheated imagination. In this way they have gained many respectable individuals, and among their number they can reckon Merchants, Divinity Students, Clergymen, Writers to the Signet, and Advocates. The influence of these over Society in general is astonishing, and most detrimental to the flow of kindly feelings, and prejudicial to the welfare of true religion. I would not have soiled paper with an account of such gross outrages of common sense, had not the active agents been cheered on in their extravagancies by influential and talented individuals. I have known gentlemen who rank high in society, come from Edinburgh and join in all the exercises of Fernicarry—declare their implicit faith in all Miss Campbell's pretensions—ask her concerning the times and seasons—enquire the meaning of certain passages of Scripture—and submit to her decisions with the utmost deference, as one inspired by heaven. These dupes, and not the enthusiastic girl, are to blame; and awful will be their accountability, for thus prostrating reason at the shrine of folly. *Her* sinful excesses are the result of principles imbibed from her spiritual instructors, and the phantoms of her imagination considered as realities. With a mixture of folly and knavery, she is deceived and deceiving; and the unhallowed combination of piety and profanity is recorded in heaven, which may be cancelled by the Lamb of God, and if so, will be followed by deep contrition, penitential regrets, and frank acknowledgments.

In reading the history of this enthusiasm, many pious persons may be offended at the ridiculous appearance which it has assumed. The feelings of these individuals I truly respect. The actions of men, however, may be considered either as proceeding from mortals or immortals. If *mortals* pretend to rationality, and yet exhibit actions bordering on

insanity, their conduct, when tried by reason, necessarily appears ridiculous in a faithful description, and this is the "front of *my* offending." Satan is Satan, though he appears as an angel of light and speaks in the language of Scripture to gain his ends. I revere piety, and censure those only who impiously assume a shew of piety as the vehicle of absurd pretensions. I consider what is not religion, separate it from true piety, and give to God what is God's; and to Satan what is Satan's. Much that I know I have concealed. I have not repeated the whisperings of suspicion; taken advantage of unguarded expressions or actions, *nor even adverted to the restorative tendency of Madeira.* I have given a simple unvarnished narration of facts; and their ridiculous appearance arises from considering them in the abstract, comparing them with reason and Scripture, unconnected with that appearance of piety which their authors employ, in order to cover their extravagancies.

Their absurd pretensions, however, must soon be laid aside. Even the credulous cannot always be duped. Pretenders to inspiration and miracles will soon be as contemptible as their names are notorious.* The more sensible among

* Since writing the above, I have received copies of the two following letters, written by Miss Campbell to a friend in her neighbourhood :—

FERNICARRY, Wednesday Evening, April 1830:

My Dear Mr. ———,

You had no sooner left this house yesterday evening than I went to the Lord, and besought him that before to-morrow morning he would let me hear of some miracle that I might inform you of. Well, in about two hours afterwards I received the enclosed Card, giving an account of a most notable miracle which has been wrought by the power of God; and I call upon you and all in your house to give glory to God, and doubt and disbelieve no longer. Signs and wonders have again appeared. Wo be to the man that will not believe. Notwithstanding, God's people shall especially be filled with the Holy Spirit, and with power, and they who hate them shall be put to shame and confusion: Amen, so let it be. But I

them, undeceived but not reclaimed, will be active in furnishing apologies for the extravagancies of their associates. Expectation disappointed will lead some to indifference, and drive others again into the mazes of Scepticism or Infidelity from which they had escaped; or they may have to weep over prospects blighted and mental energies destroyed.—The aberration, sanctified to some, will make them more watchful and circumspect in future; and wounded pride brooding over disappointment, will cause many to become Separatists.

Under the government of God, one wise end is accomplished by enthusiasm, so that not only the wrath of man, but even the wrath of Satan is made to praise God. Storms are necessary to purify the atmosphere; and under God's moral government, agitations are permitted for beneficial purposes. The mind of man is naturally of a sluggish nature, and were not Christians sometimes roused by opposition, they would sink into a fatal repose. Satisfied with

have now to inform you if you remember having said to me that I was too weak to go to the Missionary work. Well, I was weak when you said so, and felt the seeds of disease in this body, but the Holy Spirit sent home with power the message contained in the enclosed note, and suddenly I felt my pain and weakness depart, and now I am about to enter upon God's work, for I care for nothing else in this world. To-morrow, if the Lord will, I go to see my healed sister, and then I go to Glasgow. I am much in prayer for you and your dear family. May you all be witnesses for God.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) MARY CAMPBELL.

My Dear Mr. —

I hope I made you understand that it was a language, but what language? I do not remember the sound now quite correct, and during the time the Spirit of the Lord was upon me, I spoke and prayed in it most fluently. I feel at the same time that I can only speak in it when the Holy Spirit gives me utterance.

(Signed) MARY CAMPBELL.

what none disputed, blind credulity would prevail, and knowledge, as in the dark ages, be almost banished from the earth. Satan is active and enterprising, and gains much by his activity; but the excitement which he produces, overruled by God, makes Christians grow in knowledge, and become more attached to a system, which stands the test of the severest scrutiny. Satan riding on the storm, may spread desolation in his track; but the moral atmosphere is purified by the commotion. It matters little whether the commotion comes from the carnal mind, operating in the seclusion of mysticism, the extravagancies of enthusiasm, or the excesses of fanaticism;—all will ultimately work for good. The temper may be ruffled, relationships broken, friendships severed, and the Christian graces for a season obscured; but when the storm has spent its force, a calm will succeed, the clouds will be dispersed, and every thing will assume its wonted serenity. The spirits of the air hushed, and the sparks of men's own kindling quenched, Christians will bask under the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, till a similar commotion is required, and similar results follow.

Tremble not, therefore, Christians, for the ark of God;—it is safe. Be not afraid in the time of trouble. Around you there is a defence which Satan cannot destroy. He may look on the ark, but must tremble while he gazes; for “the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.”

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Of part of the pretended Languages
written by Miss Mary Campbell when un-
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"Whoever shall read this Writing, and shew the interpre-
tation thereof, shall be clothed with scarlet, and
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